

**OAKLAND BY NIGHT**

**A play in two acts**

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## **OAKLAND BY NIGHT**

### **Persons in the play:**

**Rafer – a rap star**

**Slater – a gang leader**

**Gangers 1, 2 and 3 (who double as three cops in Act II)**

**Queena – a female gang leader, once involved with Slater**

**Janelle and Markita – prostitutes, associated with Queena**

**Cooty – advisor to Slater but also a magician**

**Aunt May – another magician, friend of Cooty**

**A guitarist and other musicians if possible and more chorus members as well, if possible.**

**Place: Los Angeles**

**Time: the 1990s**

## OAKLAND BY NIGHT



**ACT I****SCENE 1 [The setting is the stage itself]****(music with percussion perhaps)****CHORUS OF GANGERS****There were two gangs in Los Angeles****A TALKING HEAD****And the situation was terminal in the city of Los Angeles****GANGERS (broken up liberally, if possible)****Situation terminal you know it brother****Been down down down so long but now now I'm comin back strong****Rippin up the street right to the beat****Gonna put it in my song****I am the rain man I am the lightning man****I am the thunder man you better believe it****A TALKING HEAD****Three people were killed in a gun battle outside a convenience store in Compton police claim that....****A TALKING HEAD****--the victims were Yusef Jones 19 of Compton and Marcus Jones 17.****A GANGER (like a griot)****There were two gangs****And the situation was terminal in the city of Los Angeles****[EXIT ALL]**

**SCENE 2 [A hang out place]**

**[THREE GANGERS ENTER. They are hanging out, passing a couple bottles around.]**

**GANGER 1**

**What you think of this Rafer guy, big hip hop star come out here?**

**GANGER 2**

**He's hippin and hoppin –**

**GANGER 3**

**They come out here think they're gonna be gangers –**

**GANGER 1**

**They got rocks in their head.**

**GANGER 2**

**They're in some kind of fantasy land is what I think.**

**GANGER 3**

**Slater, say we got to watch out for him, be bodyguard. Make sure he get all the dope and booze and pussy –**

**GANGER 3**

**He can't live without that.**

**GANGER 1**

**Neither can you.**

**GANGER 3**

**Yeah that's cool, but in his case –**

**GANGER 2**

**Maybe he got money though, you know.**

**GANGER 1**

**Extra cash he don't need, spread it around a little – could be useful.**

**GANGER 3**

**All he want to do is record all the damn time. How we supposed to get anything from this dude, he in the studio all the time?!**

**GANGER 2**

Does he really have money?

**GANGER 3**

Rings and chains and gold he got all over – walking jewelry store, Fort Knox on two legs.

**GANGER 1**

Did you know his mamma in the movement -- Black Power, liberation all that kinda thing back whenever.

**GANGER 2**

Liberation is money – got some right here, (motions to his jacket pocket) gonna get more. As far as power –

(holds up handgun)

**GANGER 1**

Definitely.

**GANGER 3**

And that's it right there.

(takes out gun)

And Slater not paying us jack either to baby sit this clown.

**GANGER 2**

These other gangs – Mexican gangs, Asian gangs – they're eatin' us up.

**GANGER 1**

He knock off his own brother too. I could hardly believe it.

**GANGER 3**

Bo wasn't taking care of business, he was too much a ladies man and party all the time and all that –

**GANGER 2**

Even so, you knock off your own brother in front of everyone just like that?

**GANGER 3**

They see division – what I'm saying, they circling around. And now we got this hip hop clown boy comin' in -- I don't know about this...

[ENTER JANELLE, and MARKITA]

**JANELLE**

Hey all you handsome –

GANGER 1  
Hey Janey –

JANELLE  
It's Janelle Janelle –

GANGER 2  
Hey Markita.

MARKITA  
Hey baby.

JANELLE/MARKITA [overlapping, very ad lib]  
...kissy kissy /kissy kissy kissy kiss...  
(they laugh)

GANGER 3  
Ain't seen you in a while, you hiding out somewhere –

MARKITA  
I been around.

JANELLE  
We been around.

GANGER 1  
Aren't you all looking fine though.

MARKITA  
We try to be. What you all doing hanging here?

JANELLE  
All such lazy ass –

GANGER 1  
I'm gonna get your ass –  
(they have a brief playful chasing game)

JANELLE  
--good for nothing --- Let me go!

GANGER 1  
I'm good for something.

**JANELLE**  
Mmm I'll bet.

**GANGER 2**  
Why you ask what we're doing? We're taking a break, chillin.

**GANGER 3**  
Chillin, yeah chillin.

**GANGER 2**  
Lot a stress you know, out on the street.

**GANGER 1**  
Poom poom poom

**JANELLE**  
Y'all be careful.

**MARKITA**  
Really. We're serious.

**JANELLE**  
We don't wanna be going to more funerals.

**MARKITA**  
Already had that.

**GANGER 2**  
Yeah, we know.

**GANGER 3**  
Now we guarding this Rafer guy come to town.

**JANELLE**  
I heard he is quite a guy

**MARKITA**  
In any number of ways, I'm hoping...

**JANELLE**  
Oh yeah?

**GANGER 1**  
What you talking? I'm right here.

**GANGER 2**

That's right. He's there. But I'm here. (stepping in front of him)

**GANGER 3**

Yeah. – look out the way. (nudging past him)

**GANGER 1**

Well, I guess we better get back.

**GANGER 2**

Time yeah.

**GANGER 3**

All this guy does is –

**GANGER 1**

Singing dancing carrying on --

**GANGER 3**

--in that studio.

**GANGER 2**

In there all the time.

**MARKITA**

We'll see if we can get him carrying on in some other location maybe. Right?

**JANELLE**

Right. We, we. Ok?

**MARKITA**

Yeah yeah yeah sure.

**GANGER 3**

I'll be in that location instead of him. What you say?

**GANGER 2**

Yeah, no it's me.

**GANGER 1**

No no no, it's all right here.

**MARKITA**

Ok, well I guess we got to take our pick.

**JANELLE**  
That's right. You all be ready.

**[ENTER QUEENA]**

**QUEENA**  
Where have you two girls been? I have been searching and searching absolutely everywhere.

**JANELLE**  
Been...

**MARKITA**  
...around...

**JANELLE**  
--around.

**QUEENA** (surveying the gangers)  
I would suggest perhaps raising our sights just a little bit, I must say. But – Have you been ingratiating yourselves with our new star we have here. Imagine the potential – money, money, money I am seeing here. And the things he could do for me in other ways. The consort of a star is almost a star herself. Am I right?

**JANELLE**  
Uh...

**MARKITA**  
Uh...yeah...

**JANELLE**  
Mmm-hmm, yeah...

**QUEENA**  
Yes. And I will finally be given the attention I deserve.

**GANGERS 3**  
Eh eh, what you talking here?

**JANELLE**  
Nothing.

**MARKITA**  
Nothing.

**QUEENA**  
Nothing, I assure you.

**GANGER 3**  
Want a drink?

**QUEENA**  
Ah no. I never drink. That. Any champagne?

**GANGER 3**  
Ha ha!

**GANGER 1**  
Damn...

**GANGER 2**  
Yeah, I got some, but it's in my bedroom. What you say?

**QUEENA**  
Ugh, lord. No. No.

Well, well... I believe we have some other things to attend to, and so --

**GANGER 1**  
Oh yeah.

**GANGER 3**  
Yeah ok.

**GANGER 2**  
Well we see you all later.

**JANELLE**  
Ok baby.

**MARKITA**  
Ok baby.

**JANELLE**  
Kissy kissy.

**MARKITA**  
Kissy kiss.

**JANELLE**

Bye.

MARKITA

Bye.

QUEENA

Yes of course, kissy and all that -- bye bye. Come on you two, let's go.

[EXIT QUEENA JANELLE, and MARKITA]

GANGERS

(music)

Money cars and women  
Money cars and women

Howl at the moon --  
That's what I say  
That's what I do,  
That is my tune  
Both night and day.

Don't get me wrong --  
Get a job, go to school,  
That's fine for some.  
I sing a different song,  
I make my own rule.

Money cars and women

They tell you what to do.  
For me that ain't cool.  
I'm like, no thank you  
Cause I ain't no fool.

Money is what you want.  
Money is all you need.  
I know the way it's going to be,  
Way it's going be for me.

Anyone gets in the way of our money --  
Man, they are going to bleed.

Let's go.

[EXIT ALL]

SCENE 3 [A fashionable lounge]

[ENTER QUEENA, JANELLE, and MARKITA]

QUEENA (about to address the girls)

Well well well...

[ENTER COOTY]

COOTY

Ah I knew I'd find you here. Now what you think you're doing? Don't tell me now, let me guess...

QUEENA

That's fine Mr. Advisor Man, how's that Mr. Slater doing anyway? Rough tough guy -- has he been having anybody else killed lately?

COOTY

Hey girls.

JANELLE

Hey.

MARKITA

Hey.

COOTY (to QUEENA)

You're sniffing around thinking that Rafer, our visiting recording artist, you thought you'd find him here, going to jump in his lap -- Right?

QUEENA

I do not carry on in such a manner, I am sure.

COOTY

Stay away from him -- he's got things to do here, work to do. He don't need some poison nightshade like you --

QUEENA

Poison nightshade -- I think that's your specialty, with all your voodoo herbs and such. By the way, you tell your friend, that Aunt May -- that love potion that she gave don't do nothing. Tried it out on --

1 Hollywood producer

1 director

and 3 actors

**And**

**None of them is in love with me yet!**

**COOTY**

**No messing with him, you hear what I'm saying?**

**QUEENA**

**I do, I do. As rude as you are, I do, unfortunately. I have to go. I have people to meet. Polite people. And successful.**

**COOTY**

**Good. You girls behave.**

**JANELLE**

**We will.**

**MARKITA**

**We will.**

**[EXIT COOTY]**

**(The girls laugh at him)**

**QUEENA**

**Well all right we've had this display here. You might as well know...I have –**

**JANELLE**

**Yeah?**

**MARKITA**

**Yeah?**

**QUEENA**

**Decided – no reason I should be ashamed, there needs to be leadership. Not Slater's kind. So heavy-handed so...typical man. I need to control the gangs. Give them the guidance – guidance – that they desperately need. We need to get rid of Slater. Don't you understand? Get rid. Rid. Rid.**

**JANELLE**

**Oh yeah.**

**MARKITA**

**Yeah ok.**

**JANELLE**

**Yeah ok yeah...**

**QUEENA**

I knew you'd agree. Hmm....and this Rafer recording artist star. He's going to help.

(QUEENA poses as though seeing her future greatness. The girls regard her and go off a bit.)

**JANELLE and MARKITA (aside)**

**JANELLE**

He got any money now? I heard he spent it all or was cheated or something.

**MARKITA**

I don't know -- got gold all over him, rings and chains, and everything -- your eyes pop out you look at him.

**JANELLE**

That's what I heard. She'll get that gold off him, get everything else off him too. Hmmm, heard he's --

**MARKITA**

Heard he's dynamite.

**JANELLE**

Dyn-o-mite.

**MARKITA**

Every day,

**JANELLE**

And all, all night.

**MARKITA**

It's what I heard.

**JANELLE**

From a little bird.

**QUEENA**

Janey!

**JANELLE**

Janelle.

**QUEENA**

Markita!

**MARKITA**  
Yeah?

**QUEENA**  
You know what I'm thinking?

**MARKITA**  
Yeah I know what you're thinking, you're thinking money.

**JANELLE**  
That's what you're always thinking.

**MARKITA**  
And if it isn't money –

**JANELLE**  
It's something that you can use to get it.

**QUEENA**  
You know it. And you know why?

**MARKITA**  
Why?

**JANELLE**  
Yeah why?

(music, she sings if possible)

**QUEENA**  
Money is what you need.  
Anyone get in the way of my money,  
They will bleed.

Money is the root  
And money is the stem  
And it is the flower.

It is only money  
That gives me power.

Er, well, and maybe one other thing.

But getting back to what I was saying – these boys need a strong leader. That's me. But they won't accept that cuz I'm a woman – grr, that makes me mad. But with a famous strong handsome star like him at my side, they will.

**What you think?**

**MARKITA**  
**Yeah, I guess.**

**JANELLE**  
**I guess, yeah.**

**QUEENA**  
**Come on let's go. We have work to do.**

**MARKITA**  
**Ok.**

**JANELLE**  
**Ok.**

**QUEENA**  
**Come ON.**

**[EXIT QUEENA]**

**(the girls are fussing with make-up)**

**MARKITA**  
**All right, all right.**

**JANELLE**  
**Coming coming...**

**Man she's –**

**MARKITA**  
**Boy she is**

**QUEENA (Off stage)**  
**Where are you? Let's go.**

**[EXIT ALL]**

**SCENE 4 [Slater's headquarters]****[ENTER SLATER]****[ENTER COOTY a bit later]****SLATER****Where the hell you been?****COOTY****Been around, been around.****SLATER****Yeah that's cool you find out anything?****COOTY****Checking things out – he's cool, recording all the time...****SLATER****For that guy Keller?****COOTY****Yeah****SLATER****He being cheated yet?****COOTY****That I can't say.****SLATER****I'm being cheated that's for sure. People cheating me. I can't trust them. We supposed to bodyguard this guy. His people from New York reach out to us – how they even know who I am?****COOTY****He got all sorts of strange connections, I can't figure it either.****SLATER****Yeah I'm not sure about this, you know.****COOTY****He aint dangerous.****SLATER**

I know that but he bring these bloods with him, they're floating all around. Been getting reports.

COOTY

They seem ok so far. They seeing the sites and all, getting fresh air and sun and all that, after being crawling through the dark canyons of New York City – can't blame 'em. I remember that place. My lieutenants are out there, they're waiting –

SLATER

Yeah, they waiting – Good! they got to do their job, they're slacking! and I know they don't like this whole thing – supplying bodyguards for this dude, but they got to do what I say – or else. You let 'em know.

COOTY

I already did. You got to chill out a little.

SLATER

No I don't need no chill out. We need to bear down. These other gangs – Mexicans, Vietnamese, Chinese – they're eating us up, we're sucking on dry bones here, used to have so much dope. I could stretch my hand out and drag in that money, it just flowed in like a river. Now look.

(pause)

Did he know Bo? you think?

COOTY

He was out here before, he might a known him, I think he did. He's the type gets around.

SLATER

Is he coming for revenge?

COOTY

No no, he's a party guy, just like Bo. Maybe that's how he knew him. Don't worry, he's cool I'm telling you. He's just chillin', after he gets done with his fool-ass songs and all, he's just hanging. It's fine.

SLATER

That's good. I'm hoping he can help out: we take care of him, he takes care of us.

(pause)

That Queena, you know, I'm worried. She was Bo's girl. She might had something to do with sending me up. Three years I'm in the joint. Now she's slinking around. But she has connections all around and information that I need. So, got to deal. This Rafer, this recording artist star type of guy can help to unify these knuckle heads I got out here. I get a star like him, he all shining with gold and everything, I get some of that gold, and it be a prestige thing, people see him with me. Raise me up, make everything look more high class. People look at me, you know what they thinking. People look at me with him, they think

something different. And he knows all sorts of high up people. I use him like a rope to climb. You seeing that Queena at all?

**COOTY**

No, no.

**SLATER**

She's trouble, she's trouble. She...she's beautiful, but she's trouble. Let's go. Got to keep my lieutenants in line, light a fire under them. I'm thinking I might need extreme measures, I don't know.

**COOTY**

Wait.

**SLATER**

What, wait? Wait what?

**COOTY**

You think I just do stuff for you. No, I do more than that, don't you know?

**SLATER**

Yeah ok, fine.

**COOTY**

I'm a doctor, roots and all. I got my roots way down in the deep dark soil, the delta. Then the Louisiana line – I step across and way far in the swamp, strange birds calling all night and the ripples on the water in the dark and the moon shining – Yeah, I got it all here in my two hands – poof, poof –

(as though contemplating something)

Ha ha... oh lord –

You need extreme measures, need extreme medicine. I got it right here.

**SLATER**

What's that?

(Cooty brings small pouches of "herbs" out of a belt he wears. He tamps them into a small pipe. He lights it, draws on it briefly. There is fragrant smoke.)

**COOTY**

This will help you.

**SLATER**

No no no.

**COOTY**

Yes, yes. Come on.

(Slater waves him away.)

(Cooty sings and dances)

(music)

Well now I  
Went on down  
To see Kansas Sue –  
Brought back my second cousin  
And a little John the Conqueroo.

Got it right here –  
Wonderful to find.  
Gonna take up your soul  
Way it wake up your mind.

Lots of people say,  
There is no way—  
They got to open the door,  
Then they see so much more.

Open the door of the smoke. Step through the smoke door, into the other world. Ask the spirits, ask the smoke. It has a mind of its own. It knows the present, the past, and the future. Yes. Whooooo....

(Coaxing the pipe into Slater's mouth. Slater backs away, avoiding, squirming.)

Come on man, come on. Open the hanger and in come the plane...whooo-eee

(Slater takes a cautious drag. Considers.)

**SLATER**

Hmm...hmmm...hmmm (then coughing)

**COOTY**

What you see? Tell me.

**SLATER**

All I see is a bunch of weird colors and then one little funny little shifty kinda monkey, prancing around – (coughing) ...

**COOTY**

See that, like a told you.

(Slater is coughing, Cooty is coughing too. Both doubled over with it.)

**SLATER**

Ugh yughh – damn – get this damned stuff out my face. You worse than that root doctor my old gramma used to have – got the damn smoke in my eye too – stings, damn...Where you get this stuff?

**COOTY**

From the Mexicans.

**SLATER**

Oh that explains it right there, probably got a bunch of dried dog turds and fried roaches, fried up gila monster – they just waiting for someone like you to come along. They seen you coming man, they seen you coming.... But let me tell ya, let me tell ya – (pause) he's in the ground, I put him there, yeah I did...my own brother.... I'm worried that I got a curse on me. I don't need any of this ground up gila monster stuff to tell me nothing.

I want you to find out what's going on out there. Find out for real. Make sure. I'm tired of all this.

I got to go to bed. I'm tired of all this.

**COOTY**

Ok. I will. Don't worry.

**SLATER**

Good.

[EXIT SLATER]

[EXIT COOTY]

**SCENE 5 [The gangers' hang out place]****[ENTER GANGERS]****[There are a large number of bottles on the table.]****GANGER 1****Hey hey hey hey, what we got here –****GANGER 2****Same old hang out place, that's cool.****GANGER 3****Got a lot of bottles here for once –****GANGER 2****Where's that bottle I had?****GANGER 3****Got it right here.****GANGER 1****Where those girls at?****[GANGER 1 had snatched a whiskey bottle earlier and was keeping it to himself.]****GANGER 3****Eh eh –****GANGER 1****Yeah ok – here. (He hands it over.)****[ENTER JANELLE and MARKITA]****JANELLE****Hey baby! (To the group)****GANGER 2****Hey Janey Jane.****JANELLE****Janelle Janelle.**

**GANGER 2**

Sit my lap here, come on.

**GANGER 3**

You don't want that dude, he's too fat.

**JANELLE**

Oh Ok (reluctant)

(As she starts to sit, Markita pulls her back by the arm as Ganger 2 pulls her by the middle into himself )

**MARKITA**

I'm saving you Janey.

(a taffy pull)

**JANELLE**

Eeee

(He wins)

**GANGER 2**

Ha ha!

**JANELLE**

(He's running his hands all around and starting to remove pieces of clothing)

All right, all right – stop! not here...

**GANGER 1**(there's a bottle near his chair on floor)

Hey you got pass her over. I get you a bottle, you give me her.

**GANGER 2**

Yeah, not getting anywhere...

**JANELLE**

What am I sitting on?

**GANGER 2**

Well I think you know.

**GANGER 3**

I'm surprised about that one.

(2 passes her to 1, but she slides onto the floor )

**JANELLE**

Let me up –

**GANGER 1**  
Hey Markita.

**MARKITA**  
No no no...

**GANGER 1**  
Come over here.

(he pulls her over to where he's sitting)

**MARKITA**  
Not now...behave... let me go...

**GANGER 1**  
These girls are so –

**GANGER 3**  
Yeah I know.

**GANGER 2**  
They up themselves.

**MARKITA** (finally pulling away)  
We are ladies.

**GANGER 1**  
Of the evening.

**JANELLE**  
Maybe so, that's still a lady.

**MARKITA**  
You been in that studio with Rafe?

**JANELLE**  
You keeping him safe?

**GANGER 3**  
Yeah we do our best.

**GANGER 2**  
Nothing to do, he in there all the –

**GANGER 1**

All the time.

**GANGER 3**  
All the damn time.

**MARKITA**  
Well that's good. You keeping him out of trouble?

**GANGER 1**  
He got his own people come out with him, I don't know why he even –

**GANGER 2**  
Oh hey!

**GANGER 3**  
Here he is!

**JANELLE and MARKITA**  
Rafe!

**MARKITA**  
Rafer honey, where you been?

**JANELLE**  
Your best girls been looking all over town.

**RAFER**  
I am right here! We gonna get things goin on here or not? Having a party – I need a drink.  
Seven songs today man, count em, seven – Lucky number

That right and I'm a lucky man

I'm a lucky man, I'm a lucky man  
That's it right there  
One two three

Bad luck around  
All around the town  
But bad luck don't follow me

Gonna sing my song  
And it can't go wrong  
Cause I got nine lives –

Count 'em, count 'em

**MARKITA**  
I believe it.

**JANELLE**  
Me too.

**RAFER**  
And they're all strong.

Be a black cat  
Slinkin'  
Where the streetlights are blinkin' –  
Catch me if you can,  
Cause I'm a lucky man.

**GANGER 3**  
If you so lucky how come you not rich?

(Group laughter)

**RAFER**  
Got lots of bottles here – oh don't let me drink too much. (to the gangers)

**MARKITA**  
Keep him in line –

**JANELLE**  
That's right.

**RAFER**  
Who says I'm not rich? Rich in a lot of ways. Lot of ways to be rich – rich in money –yeah I got money, got some right here

(throws down bills)

Rich in spirit, rich in heart – got a lot that. Rich in friends – you're all my friends, I know.  
So that's cool, so what more do I need? – money, gold – hey, here it is.

(He displays his jewelry)

**GANGER 3**  
They call you a walking jewelry store. What they say. Did you know that?

**RAFER**  
No I didn't know that.

**GANGER 3**

Hey baby, come on over here.

MARKITA

I'm fine where I am, that's cool.

GANGER 3

No I said come here – come on.

(He pulls her, slightly roughly.)

RAFER

Hey hey hey

GANGER 3

Hey look out – don't mess with me!

(The two square off.)

RAFER

That's fine, that's fine.

GANGER 2

Chill out man.

RAFER

Got to learn some manners with my girls.

JANELLE

That's right.

MARKITA

That's right.

GANGER 1

That's fine. Let it go, man.

RAFER

So anyhow...

What I put down

Pure gold

Best ever heard, best ever sold.

You better believe it.

Speaking of sold.... So I'm supposed to meet with this guy Slater. I'm supposed to go to see him. He don't want to come to me. I got to go to him. Who does he think he – never mind,

we'll just go do it. This was all set up by people back there, New York. Who knows what goes on there. Where are my New York homies anyhow? They come out with me – ain't seen them.

**GANGER 2**

They around, don't worry.

**GANGER 1**

The hanging with us sometimes.

**GANGER 3**

When they feel like they can lower themselves down to our level here.

**RAFER**

Eh no no no, come on man, don't be like that.

**GANGER 3**

Yeah how I'm supposed to be? that's cool...

**GANGER 2**

We don't mind, don't worry, people always think we're nothing.

**GANGER 1**

We're just garbage flying around –

**GANGER 2**

That's what they think.

**GANGER 3**

Yeah we're used to it.

**RAFER**

I don't like what I'm hearing here, everyone has...I'm not going to preach. Remind me of my mother –

Join me in a little song here.

**GANGER**

A song?

**GANGER**

I can't sing.

**RAFER**

Yes you can, it's contagious. So if you're with me, then you can.

(Music – a guitarist is on stage as accompanist. He is not a character.)

**RAFER**

You know you are fine  
When you have money and wine  
And some kind of

Fine Ass Lady

**GANGERS**

Uh yeah ok all right yeah (ad lib)

**MARKITA**

I don't like your attitude

**JANELLE**

Me neither.

(swats him)

**RAFER**

Oooo

You know it is cool  
And you can have your school  
Cause my man she is a  
Fine Ass Lady

**MARKITA** (He squeezes her rear end)

I guess we'll just *have to* put up with it.

**JANELLE** (He slides over and loops his arm around her waist. They sway together, but she breaks free.)

Watch out, don't get fresh with me – hmm.

**JANELLE**

You're just as bad as them.

**MARKITA**

Worse!

**RAFER**

Money cars and women money cars and women  
Big money and hot cars and  
My she is a

**Fine Ass Lady**

**(guitarist off)**

**[ENTER COOTY]**

**COOTY**

**I knew you were here.**

**RAFER**

**How you know that? Now this guy, following me around –**

**COOTY**

**That's right, I'm your shadow. But a shadow is a funny thing. We got to go over to meet up. You got the word right?**

**RAFER**

**Oh yeah, some big gorilla type guy shows up at the studio, tells me I got to go see his boss.**

**COOTY**

**Yeah well, they aren't always the most diplomatic you might say.**

**RAFER**

**Guess not.**

**COOTY**

**That's cool. All right, let's –**

**RAFER**

**Bye everybody.**

**COOTY**

**Say goodbye to your friends Rafe.**

**RAFER**

**Goodbye to your friends Rafe.**

**See you bloods later.**

**GANGER 1           (ad lib)**

**Yeah, we be here.**

**GANGER 2**

**Don't worry.**

**GANGER 3**

Yep.

**RAFER**

And you two, you both behave or I'll paddle your fannies –

**JANELLE**

I can't wait.

**RAFER**

Me neither.

**COOTY**

Come on.

[EXIT RAFER and COOTY]

**GANGER 1**

Hey baby whyn't you come hang with us?

**GANGER 2**

Yeah whynt you come?

**GANGER 3**

With me.

**GANGER 1**

No, with me.

**GANGER 2**

Not with him, he's really (makes pinky gesture)

**GANGER 3**

Up with you. (hitting him)

**MARKITA**

Yeah, well that's fine. You all such fine well-spoken gentleman.

**JANELLE**

How could we resist?

**MARKITA**

That's right.

**JANELLE**

**I think.**

**MARKITA**  
**We're tired.**

**JANELLE**  
**Rafe wore us out.**

**MARKITA**  
**Better than any of you.**

**JANELLE**  
**That's for sure.**

**GANGER 1**  
**Ow –**

**GANGER 2**  
**Oooh.**

**GANGER 3**  
**Damn.**

**GANGER 1**  
**I'm killed.**

**GANGER 2**  
**I'm dying here.**

**GANGER 3**  
**She shot me down, I'm dead on the ground.**

**GANGER 1**  
**Oh please, baby, I'm dying here.**

**GANGER 2**  
**You got to help this dying man here.**

**GANGER 3**  
**That's right.**

**GANGER 1**  
**Cuz he's dying. That means he ain't strong. I'm strong, so –**

**GANGER 2**  
**That's so funny – no no no, I'm your man.**

**GANGER 1**

**I'm not dying anymore, changed my mind. I'm right straight – (stands)**

**GANGER 2**

**Erect.**

**GANGER 3**

**Yeah erect.**

**GANGER 1 (stands)**

**That's me.**

**GANGER 2 (stands)**

**Me too**

**GANGER 3 (stands)**

**Me too**

**MARKITA**

**Very funny, but we have to go.**

**JANELLE**

**And it is, it is, it really is –**

**MARKITA**

**SO funny...**

**GANGER 1**

**Yeah, ok ok ok...**

**GANGER 2**

**Bye.**

**GANGER 3**

**Bye.**

**[EXIT THE TWO GIRLS, laughing, etc.]**

**GANGER 1**

**I think they're spies maybe or something like that.**

**GANGER 2**

**Nah.**

**GANGER 3**

**Yeah, I been sometimes wondering.**

**GANGER 2**

**Nah, nah.**

**GANGER 1**

**How come they hangin around so much? Never saw them that much before.**

**GANGER 3**

**They got they nose up way in the air every time now they coming round, coming around.**

**GANGER 1**

**It's him. They his groupies, part of the deal.**

**GANGER 2**

**Yeah I know.**

**GANGER 1**

**But it could be more than that. They spying on him maybe.**

**GANGER 3**

**Or they're spying on us – what you think?**

**GANGER 2**

**I seen hookers working for the feds before. They seem different. I don't know.... We think about it.**

**GANGER 3**

**Yeah, ok.**

**GANGER 2**

**We need to think about it, watch what we're doing.**

**GANGER 1**

**Well I can see we better go. We be late, he'll kill us.**

**GANGER 3**

**Oh yeah exit both**

**GANGER 2**

**Let's go.**

**[EXIT ALL]**

**SCENE 6 [Slater's headquarters]**

**[ENTER GANGERS who mill about a moment. Then ENTER SLATER]**

**SLATER**

Well all right, men. We have a bad situation. I don't have to tell you. You know. One time there were two gangs. I was the head of one, my brother was the head of the other. Bo – Bo my brother. Well, we had a disagreement. And some of my own people turned traitor on me, went over to his side. I remember the day I had to deal with it – finally. Then more of my people ran off. I'm glad to say – you all stayed. The best stayed. But when our gang split off in different pieces – some traitor dogs ran here, some ran over there. Just like the rats running in the alley. Some of their gangs split off too. They're four, five now – who knows. and they all making deals sneakin' with the Mexican gangs, the Asian gangs – they want to choke us off. They're doing it.

Once we had our lines all laid out nice for drugs, girls, guns – whatever you want. Now getting all dried up – we're drying up here. Like the roots of a weed you pullup out the ground. Get all pale and shriveled up, that's what our system is now, little pale threads lying out in the Los Angeles sun. Soon be dust. And blow all away.

**[ENTER RAFER]**

Oh. There he is. But hey, don't want to bother you, all this stuff here we been talking about. Let's have a drink.

**RAFER**

I never drink with business negotiations. Thank you anyway.

**SLATER**

Well I was hoping this would be more a friendly type of thing. But that's fine. So how have you been?

**RAFER**

We're doing good, we're seeing the sites.

**SLATER**

We?

**RAFER**

Some of my bloods from the city come out with me. They're floating around somewhere.

**SLATER**

**Yes, I heard**

**RAFER**

**They want to keep me safe. But I'm fine.**

**SLATER**

**You are fine.**

**RAFER**

**Yeah I think so. You take out your own brother, I heard you did.**

**SLATER**

**No no no – we were always real good together – business dispute with tragic consequences. Everybody here, they know the story.**

**RAFER**

**Yeah?**

**SLATER**

**Yeah it was sad. And his passing, it was a blow to me....**

**RAFER**

**Yeah I see I can see that.**

**SLATER**

**Let's talk in private now. (to the gangers and girls) All you get out.**

**[THEY EXIT]**

**But let me get right to the point. You mention your bloods. That's fine, but to be honest there might be dangers out here still, especially for someone like yourself, famous and all. That makes someone a target. Let me tell you, they got more corruption in this town than anybody ever saw. And the people in charge do nothing. My proposal is – I have professionals who can provide the security that you need. In exchange we would be satisfied with a small percentage of the profits from your recordings.**

**RAFER**

**Well...I don't know....**

**SLATER**

**We can be trusted. After all, we are familiar with your history. Your mother's activities in the movement back in those days.**

**RAFER**

**How you know about all that?**

**SLATER**

Well you know word gets around...and I myself am a student of history. Especially that history. It is inspiring.

**RAFER**

Yeah, it is. And it's my job – my task, my mission – to revive some of the spirit of those times. I wasn't around then of course but I learned about it all from my mother. I know how much she did, how much she sacrificed. And we can't let that go. We've got to hold onto it. Yeah...somehow.... It's a big task for me....

**SLATER**

I can see that.

**RAFER**

You didn't tell me how you knew about my mother.

**SLATER**

Well see...see this – crumbs...in my pockets.<sup>i</sup> See...and birds come, little birds.

**RAFER**

That's interesting. Well it's been very nice meeting with you. I'll let you know what I decide later.

**SLATER**

That's fine, but don't wait too long.

**RAFER**

Of course.

[EXIT RAFER]

(Slater sits, considering)

**SLATER**

Hey!

(The gangers enter)

I need you to follow this guy. I need to know who he's with, where he goes, what he does and who he does it with. Understand?

**GANGERS (ad lib)**

Yeah yeah yeah sure...

**SLATER**

**I got lots of bullets, lots of guns. But I need to know...different things. Information. Knowledge. That's what I need. And I need this guy for...different things. He's going to do what I want, or else.**

**[EXIT SLATER]**

**GANGERS**

**Knowledge knowledge  
Knowledge ain't from college,  
Knowledge what you get  
When you're out on the street.**

**You come up on some dude  
Been knowing a long time,  
He don't have no attitude  
And you both got some news,  
You exchange your views  
You compare your notes  
And you get some quotes –**

**Politicians lyin'  
Pretty soon be dyin'.**

**Knowledge knowledge  
Knowledge ain't from college,  
Knowledge what you get  
When you're out on the street.**

**SCENE 7**

**[ENTER QUEENA to empty stage.]**

**QUEENA**

**Where is everybody? These people always running off. I'm always chasing after – very frustrating to me grrr....**

**[ENTER JANELLE AND MARKITA]**

**I've been chasing him, he runs off every damn time.**

**MARKITA**

**Who?**

**JANELLE**

**Yeah who?**

**QUEENA**

**That Rafer, who else? He must be crazy. To run away from a woman like me. Now let me come right to the point:**

**You are not -- not, not – doing enough work, bringing in enough money or – and this is in many ways the most important thing of all, especially to an intelligent woman like myself –**

**I need. More. Information. Understand?**

**Both of you?**

**MARKITA**

**Yes ma'am.**

**QUEENA**

**GRRR!!**

**JANELLE**

**Ok ok ok –**

**QUEENA**

**You're not giving me jack! They're having a party – big deal. They're getting drunk, they're getting high – what else is new? I coulda told YOU that. All that's just common sense, common knowledge. They're a bunch of gangers, he's a rap star. What else would they be doing, of course.**

**MARKITA**

**Sorry Queena.**

**JANELLE**  
Yeah sorry.

**QUEENA**  
I need to know who they're meeting and why and where, and him especially, and what they're planning and how they think. This especially.

**MARKITA**  
Ok.

**JANELLE**  
Yeah ok.

**QUEENA**  
That's right. Because if you know how they think, you know what they're gonna do, and then – you got 'em. Now you got to go out there and get into the sack with every single one of those guys.

**MARKITA**  
We did that.

**JANELLE**  
Yeah.

**QUEENA**  
But you have to tell them you'll do anything –and then do it – make them love you, make them trust you. They have a lot of stress – people shooting at them, they keep all that bottled up inside. That's why they're so crazy. But they want to let it out, they want to release that pressure. You make them spill it all out. Hmm, yes. You tell them you love them. This way we'll get the information we need.

**MARKITA**  
You telling it to Slater?

**JANELLE**  
Yeah are you?

**QUEENA**  
Hmm – give him just enough to keep him happy. Now you both get out there and get them to tell you things – or else. You know I know lots of people. It's my specialty, my profession – yes it is. And that includes the police. The higher ups, not your beat cops and your traffic and all them – no no no. Higher ups. And you both have – histories, shall we say.

**MARKITA**  
Don't worry, Queena.

**MARKITA**  
Yeah, don't worry.

**MARKITA**  
We're with you.

**JANELLE**  
We work for you.

**MARKITA**  
We'll do what you say.

**QUEENA**  
Good, or else. I have to go, I'm going to be late.

**[EXIT QUEENA]**

**MARKITA**  
Could be dangerous. They get the idea were spying –

**JANELLE**  
They'll chop our heads off.

**MARKITA**  
I need a drink maybe.

**JANELLE**  
Yeah me too.

**[EXIT BOTH]**

**SCENE 8**

**[ENTER COOTY to an empty stage]**

**COOTY**

Spirits listening all the time. They're listening, they're talking, whispering...they're all around. Don't make a sound, shhhh – you can hear....

**[ENTER AUNT MAE]**

(She wears a long dress with a shawl wrapped around. She stands there, observing)

**COOTY**

Oh yeah...oh yeah...

The air is full of spirits and energy and voices, and its full of shadows – once I saw demons in my room, they were female demons...

**AUNT MAE**

I can imagine.

**COOTY**

Succubae they call them.

**AUNT MAE**

I'm not going to inquire any further.

(She takes from her pockets an egg. She passes it through her hands, stroking, exploring its surface. It's as though she's preparing to do magic with it, and perhaps she is. The egg may be of a strange color, if desired.)

**COOTY**

...reaching out their arms toward me. Their arms were like smoke on the air. They came out of nowhere in the dark, drifted all toward me... I remember. These things exist, they're around everywhere. Some are evil and some are good.

**AUNT MAE**

You got to call upon the good ones, it's the only way to be. If you do, then nothing can hurt you. What you talking to yourself so much for? You still fooling with that magic –herbs and mojo and –

**COOTY**

**No I give it up. I'm a sensible person. How about you?**

**AUNT MAE**

**Long time ago, you know. You seeing her boy around these days?**

**COOTY**

**No no.**

**AUNT MAE**

**You're lying.**

**COOTY**

**Me lie? He needs guidance out here. I'm worried. I need to give him guidance.**

**AUNT MAE**

**He's a man now, can make his own decisions. Know what I think? – no one knows the soul, what it needs. The soul is a strange thing to be walking around on the earth.**

**COOTY**

**That's interesting. You always did have strange ideas – but interesting. Got 'em from all those books you read. Strange books too. Expensive too. I remember running all over New York City, rare this or that. Where you get the money for all that anyhow?**

**AUNT MAE**

**Never mind, I always shared with you. Paid your rent half the time.**

**COOTY**

**That's true you did. Remember those days?**

**AUNT MAE**

**I remember.**

**COOTY**

**So much hope then. So much. Now look.**

**AUNT MAE**

**It'll come back.**

**COOTY**

**He will need me later. You can't try to run me off from him. The soul has its darkness and it has its light.**

**AUNT MAE**

**I hope you know what you're doing.**

**COOTY**

**I do. I want to see it all rise up again.**

**AUNT MAE**

**It will. The movement will live on. I know. Tell that Janelle and Markita to come see me.**

**COOTY**

**How you know them?**

**AUNT MAE**

**I know that Queena, so I know them.**

**COOTY**

**I'll see if I can find them.**

**AUNT MAE**

**We'll see each other sometime.**

**COOTY**

**Sometime, some place.**

**AUNT MAE**

**Time and place, time and space.**

**[EXIT BOTH]**

**SCENE 9 [Rafer's headquarters]**

**[ENTER RAFER, pursued by JANELLE and MARKITA]**

**MARKITA**  
**Rafer Rafer**

**JANELLE**  
**Wait wait!**

**RAFER**  
**Yeah? So what I'm waiting for – hey you're looking real nice, let me see. (looking down Janelle's blouse)**

**JANELLE**  
**Hey –**  
**(Slater moves to Markita)**

**MARKITA**  
**Ooo--ooo wait, not now (smacks his hand)**

**(They arrange themselves in front of him)**

**JANELLE**  
**You got to pay attention to us.**

**MARKITA**  
**Yeah.**

**RAFER**  
**Sure. I am. Definitely.**

**JANELLE**  
**What's wrong Rafe?**

**MARKITA**  
**Yeah honey, what's the problem?**

**JANELLE**  
**You're looking really down.**

**MARKITA**  
**You have been for a while too.**

**RAFER**  
Nah nah nah...

**JANELLE**  
Yes, you have.

**MARKITA**  
Yeah. Tell me what's the problem?

**JANELLE**  
Tell me too.

**RAFER**  
Well...well...I've just been thinking. Old girlfriend I used to have last time I was here.

**MARKITA**  
Oh.

**JANELLE**  
Oh, hmm, well...

(aside)

**MARKITA**  
Shh shh – let him talk. He's got to let it out.

**JANELLE**  
Yeah that's true.

**RAFER**  
What you whispering over there?

**JANELLE**  
Nothing nothing.

**MARKITA**  
Nothing.

**JANELLE**  
Well you got to let that out.

**MARKITA**  
All that emotion.

**RAFER**

**Yeah, I got to sing it though. This is not a rap. Something different. My more romantic side. Oh well...**

**(guitarist again, music in a different style)**

**Lying on the floor  
Just lying here  
Waiting for the door  
To open just part way  
Waiting for someone -- who? --  
To step on through**

**Lying on the floor  
I'm waiting here  
For the blinds to crack right open  
And the light to appear  
Sun yolk breaking through its shell  
With out a chick**

**Lying on the floor  
Yeah I'm waiting for  
The day to flash  
Its smile on the wall  
And maybe someone  
Sometime today might call**

**MARKITA  
That is so beautiful.**

**JANELLE  
Yeah I can see you have so much emotion there.**

**RAFER  
Well hey, thank you.**

**Maybe I got another. Let's see.**

**(music in a different style)**

**Window shade  
Is light blue  
In the morning  
Maybe damp with the dew  
In the early morning  
Full of pearly mist  
With the sun's knitting needles  
Pushed through**

And I am  
Thinking of you  
Been awake all night  
Or just about  
Yes this is what I do  
They say  
That it will pass  
One day  
Just like the dew  
But I must say  
That I don't really  
Want it to  
I get up  
To write your name  
In cold dew traces  
On the windowpane  
And when the sun shines through  
It will have gone away  
But I'll still think of you  
All day long and every day

**MARKITA**

Well, look now Rafer, you've got to snap out of this.

**JANELLE**

Yeah, that's right.

**MARKITA**

You're always strong.

**JANELLE**

You're always fiery and strong.

**MARKITA**

You're always fiery strong and full of light and smiling and laughing –

**JANELLE**

Your spirit is big, you got to let it ring out!

**MARKITA**

When you're in that studio, that's what it is!

**JANELLE**

Yes!

**MARKITA**

And what you want her for anyway, when you got both of us?

**RAFER**

Ok, ok. I guess that's true, yeah...

**MARKITA**

But you know –

(aside)

Should we tell him?

**JANELLE**

Have to tell him for his own good.

[ENTER THE GANGERS]

**GANGER 1**

Hey up man?

**GANGER 2**

Yeah hey –

**GANGER 3**

Hey looking good, relaxin'.

**RAFER**

Yeah, little bit.

**GANGER 1**

You need it, been workin' so hard.

**RAFER**

Yeah all the time -- in there, poom poom. Workin' hard, hardly workin'. How I have fun.

Got to take a break sometime. Where those bottles – they're hidin'.

(Janelle and Markita bring bottles)

**JANELLE**

Got it right here, don't worry.

**RAFER**

Did you say you saw her around someplace?

**JANELLE**

Uh...yeah.

**MARKITA**

She's been out here for a while I think...

**RAFER**

Really? She's here?

**MARKITA**

But...

**RAFER**

She's here really?

**JANELLE**

Yeah but...

**MARKITA**

But...

Have a drink.

**JANELLE**

She's been –

**MARKITA**

She's kinda...wild.

**JANELLE**

Yeah.

**MARKITA**

Yeah.

(the gangers pick up the unexpected thread)

**GANGER 1**

Oh yeah.

**GANGER 2**

Oh yeah.

**GANGER 3**

Oh yeah.

**JANELLE/MARKITA (in unison)**

**Yeah.**

**GANGER 1**

**She is so... (laughter from the other gangers) ...so good. (quick aside to Markita) I'll have some of that. (the whiskey)**

**GANGER 2**

**Yeah she's...great – oh yeah.**

**GANGER 3**

**Couple fingers (to the girls, regarding the whiskey) She's a great girl, incredible. I never saw a girl be...**

**JANELLE/MARKITA (overlapping)**

**All right/ all right/ never mind/stop it, stop it (shushing)**

**GANGER 1**

**Yeah. Right. Never mind. (to the girls) Gimme another little blast there. (grabs Markita's skirt a little as she's going by. She ignores it.)**

**GANGER 2**

**Me too.**

**GANGER 3**

**Same here.**

**MARKITA**

**Well, we found our new job.**

**JANELLE (helping her)**

**As bartender – cool.**

**MARKITA**

**Cocktail waitress.**

**RAFER**

**That's fine, that's fine.... I don't know, I don't know, I don't know if that's fine. – No, no, no – it's not – It's not fine.**

**MARQUITA**

**Rafer...**

**JANELLE**

**Rafer, honey...**

**GANGER 2**

**Rafe –**

**RAFER**

Where are we going? What are we doing? Seems like people need.... They need something...direction. I don't know.... My mother back in the days of the movement, she sacrificed so much. This is how it ends up? I'm just... mad... at -- different things. This guy, this producer...cheating me...this gangster wants a piece of my money just to 'protect' me...yeah 'protect.' I don't need 'protect.'

Got to stand up, you know?

**MARKITA**

You got to let that out. I guess.

**GANGER 2**

Don't know that much about it...the movement and all...

**JANELLE**

Maybe not but we sense you have a lot of anger.

**MARKITA**

Yeah, frustration...

**RAFER**

But...I feel like doing something... I don't even know what.

**GANGER 2**

Yeah, that's cool man, chill out a little.

**GANGER 3**

Yeah, you seem really tense.

**MARKITA**

Come on, Rafe.

**JANELLE**

Yeah, let's have some fun here a little bit.

**MARKITA**

Speaking of that

**JANELLE**

Where's that bottle

**(Janelle and Markita are pouring drinks.)**

**RAFER**

**Yea I'll have some.**

**JANELLE**

**Yeah, ok here you go.**

**MARKITA**

**Here YOU go. Mind your manners.**

**GANGER 1**

**Come on, come on. (grabbing her dress harder)**

**MARKITA**

**Keep your hands off me – you must be drunk.**

**RAFER**

**Eh eh eh come on.**

**GANGER 1**

**Well, I'll have this one then (grabbing Janelle hard). One's good as the other, right? Come on baby –**

**JANELLE**

**Get away!**

**RAFER**

**All right – enough of you. You stand down. You keep your hands off them when they say.**

**GANGER 1**

**Eh man – don't be getting in my face.**

**RAFER**

**I am getting in your face.**

**(Ganger 1 grabs Janelle forcefully. She pulls away, he pulls out a knife.)**

**GANGER 1**

**(he grabs her hard, with the knife against her face)  
Maybe I'll carve her face – how would that be? ha?**

**(Rafer draws a gun.)**

**RAFER**

**I'll shoot you dead.**

**(Ganger hesitates, Janelle slips free. Both she and Markita run behind Rafer.)**

**GANGER 2**

**All right, look – enough.**

**GANGER 3**

**Yeah enough.**

**GANGER 2**

**Come on, come on.**

**GANGER 3**

**We got to get outa here.**

**GANGER 1**

**Yeah, boring anyway.**

**That old time liberation stuff -- that's high button shoes, man, high button shoes. It's over. You be over next maybe, better watch your step.**

**[EXIT GANGERS]**

**MARKITA**

**Oh Rafe, don't get into things like that.**

**RAFER**

**Well I just had to. (to Janelle) Are you all right?**

**JANELLE**

**Yeah, I'm ok.**

**MARKITA**

**I'm so sick of them!**

**RAFER (being a bit protective)**

**That's fine...that's fine...ok? I would just say, those who know nothing, are nothing. Those who know nothing are nothing.**

**Come on, let's go.**

**[EXIT ALL]**

**[ENTER GANGERS]**

**GANGERS**

**Well it's a lonely old town  
When you ain't been around  
We just poking, we just smoking  
Gone watch nothin' bad be spoken  
Cause if they is then you know  
It ain't gonna be no no no jokin'  
Get yo head blowed off  
Get yo head blowed off  
Get yo head blowed off**

**SCENE 10 [Slater's headquarters]**

**[ENTER GANGERS]**

**GANGER 1**

**He says we gonna have a party or something?**

**GANGER 2**

**Slave driver every other time –**

**GANGER 3**

**Now all of a sudden –**

**GANGER 2**

**Yeah pretty funny**

**GANGER 3**

**Party all the time anyway...**

**GANGER 1**

**Yeah what's this about?**

**[ENTER SLATER]**

**Well men I want you to just relax a little bit before we have so much work to do. We have a lot to do. I already told you before. It's a bad situation. We have these other gangs want to eat us up. They're disrespecting us. Disrespecting me. Stealing our business. But hey – all work no play makes a dull boy. Right? We don't want any dull boys. You all have a few drinks. Lighten up, have a party.... And we ordered some entertainment.**

**[ENTER JANELLE and MARKITA in special gowns. They have been hired as strippers.]**

**GANGERS**

**Whooo hooo hey yeah, whistles etc (ad lib)**

**(Janelle and Markita do a striptease, while they recite and/or sing)**

**We are here  
To entertain you,  
Let us briefly  
Detain you**

**While we reveal**

**What we otherwise conceal**

**The things that you  
So desperately desire  
Till your body and your mind  
Are on fire.  
We'll take off just so much,  
You may look but not  
No never, never,  
Never touch**

**And yet  
We take off more –  
Dim the lights now,  
Lock the door**

**And now, now, now  
We are almost naked  
Ready to open wide  
What you want, want, want so badly  
And which we no longer hide.**

**SLATER  
Wait. No, no. No more of this. No more, no more....**

**GANGER 1  
Hey, what's wrong.**

**GANGER 2  
Yeah.**

**GANGER 3  
Just getting good.**

**(Janelle and Markita hurriedly put their things back on.)**

**[ENTER COOTY]**

**GANGER 3  
Hey mr. advisor...**

**GANGER 1  
Yeah, hey.**

**GANGER 2  
But you're not as pretty as them.**

**COOTY**

These are very nice girls. You should respect them.

**SLATER**

I agree with that. We need respect. Respect our women. Respect our people. I'm hearing all these things. Old lady on the street abused by some punks, two of my own men brutally murdered by the Mexicans with help from the Vietnamese.

We need to attack. Been doing all these defensive things, ward off here, push back there. Just kind of holding on. But now I've decided.

All right you bloods, get back to work. You got to guard our guest we have – make sure. But you got to prepare for war. Tell the others. All of them. And give these girls a ride home.

[EXIT GANGERS, JANELLE, and MARKITA]

**SLATER**

I been thinking it for a while. But now I know. I'm certain now. It's a bad thing, a dangerous thing. I didn't want to face up to it. But now – can't be put off no more. We got to attack. Not defend. Attack. The Mexican and the Asian gangs both – two front war. We need money. But I have to protect our people. I need money to do that. What you think?

**COOTY**

Ain't saying yes, ain't saying no. I'm saying be sure.

**SLATER**

Yes, I know what you mean. But not going anywhere just standing here. Let's go.

**COOTY**

Yeah ok.

[EXIT BOTH]

**SCENE 11**

**[ENTER QUEENA to empty stage. She is waiting impatiently.]**

**QUEENA**

**Well? I just missed that Rafer once again. I have the strangest feeling. Could he be avoiding me?**

**MARKITA**

**No.**

**JANELLE**

**No.**

**QUEENA**

**I didn't think so. So what did you find out?**

**MARKITA**

**It's not too good.**

**JANELLE**

**No...**

**QUEENA**

**Well what?**

**MARKITA**

**That Slater, he's getting ready to start a gang war.**

**JANELLE**

**Big time. Big time. He says he's going to attack everywhere. Everywhere.**

**MARKITA**

**Yeah everywhere, everyone.**

**JANELLE**

**The Mexicans, the Asian gangs.**

**MARKITA**

**Our own guys that broke away from him. And we know he wants to use Rafer to sort of...get more prestige.**

**JANELLE**

To look good.

MARKITA  
And money too.

JANELLE  
Yeah.

MARKITA  
Yeah

QUEENA  
That's fine, but I'm going to use him first. All right here's what we do. You go to both the Vietnamese and the Mexicans and tell them, give the warning, let them know what's coming.

MARKITA  
Should we really do that?

JANELLE  
Yeah, we spy on *them*, not supposed to *tell* them stuff. They supposed to tell *us* stuff.

QUEENA  
We need to do this to keep things in balance. Balance of power. Slater is getting too up himself. I want to take him down a peg. There – I said it. And lately I've been having some success. Getting in with some very high-powered gentlemen. Yes. But I still want...certain things.

I'll be stepping out here, cuz I have arrived, it has finally happened. No more being underneath some man all the time –except in the way I want to be – 'do this, do that' – just like I'm some kind of *property* – a table or a chair. Now I got a little something for myself and I'll be getting more much more. Hah. Get to work.

[EXIT QUEENA]

JANELLE  
You think we should do like what she said?

MARKITA  
I don't like it, I don't I just –

JANELLE  
I don't either. You know what, maybe we should tell Slater.

MARKITA  
No no no – tell Slater!?! He'll kill us.

**JANELLE**  
Yeah, you're right.

**MARKITA**  
Things going crazy here.

**JANELLE**  
I'm afraid.

**MARKITA**  
Me too. We better go. See that Aunt May. She'll tell us what to do.

**JANELLE**  
And one of Rafer's bloods from New York got shot yesterday.

**MARKITA**  
Maybe we should go see him in the hospital, what you think?

**JANELLE**  
Maybe wait on that a little.

**MARKITA**  
Rafer, I know he's angry.

**JANELLE**  
And he's worried.

**MARKITA**  
And they all run off on him.

**JANELLE**  
Yeah, I thought that was funny.

**MARKITA**  
They just pack up and away they went.

**JANELLE**  
Back east.

**MARKITA**  
But they're supposed to be his bodyguards. Now he doesn't have any.

**JANELLE**  
We'll be his bodyguards.

**MARKITA**

Yeah ok.

**JANELLE**

Let's go, I want to go to bed.

**MARKITA**

I hear you.

**JANELLE**

Alone.

**MARKITA**

Yeah, that's right. (both giggling)

[EXIT BOTH]

**SCENE 12 [Rafer's place]**

[ENTER RAFER and the three GANGERS.]

(They are all very drunk, but Rafer the most. They are coming back after clubbing. Rafer has trouble standing and the other three are helping him along.)

**RAFER**

Whooo eh. Eh where's that bottle, you hogging the whole thing.

**GANGER 1**

Got it right here, don't worry.

**GANGER 2**

Chill man.

**RAFER**

Hey hey you guys...my bloods, man, I don't know where they all run off to. I ain't worried. I don't need guards.

**GANGER 3 (overlapping)**  
Yeah ok./

**GANGER 1**  
/Yeah we know, we know./

**GANGER 2**  
/Sure, man, we know, that's cool

**RAFER**  
But I'm just saying, I need my bloods, my friends and you guys here – we had a bad moment there, a while –

**THE THREE (overlapping)**  
No, it's ok/ yea yeah/ no problem, man –

**GANGER 3**  
That's right by gone's be –/

**GANGER 2**  
/Water under the bridge all that – /

**GANGER 1**  
/That's right, it's cool man, it's cool –

**RAFER**  
No, I feel bad. I was out of line, I was ...I don't know... I am here to try...try...to...I'm too loaded...try to raise up the people, give them...(stumbles)

Whoooo...hey.... *A voice* like....You know what I'm saying?

**GANGER 1**  
Yeah yea yeah sure we get that/

**GANGER 2**  
/We can see that/

**GANGER 3**  
/Definitely

**RAFER**  
You all working for Slater, he's working for that guy Keller....

**GANGER 3**

No it's not really/

**GANGER 2**

/Complicated you know/

**GANGER 1**

/Yeah

**RAFER**

So Slater says I got to be in this special apartment he give me here. Yeah, I'm under house arrest – this my headquarters, but it's really my jail.

Ha ha can you believe that, can you be-lieve... that! ? how this happened? how all this happed? I don't know...

**THE THREE (overlapping)**

No it's just/

/He want you to/

/Chill/

/Rest/

/Yeah/

/You got to be safe

**RAFER**

I'm safe. I'm always safe. Why? I got the spirit – “every time I feel the spirt” – you ever hear that, that old song? Inspiring, you know.

But I got the spirit and I'm giving the people...I'm giving them...something.... I got to lie down... (he does)

Whooo....a voice...(starting up)...a voice...my...voice....yeah... yeah....

(Rafer sinks down and passes out)

**GANGER 3 (places gun to Rafer's head)**

Yeah, I got a voice for you. This a ten-millimeter voice...kinda loud...but hey....

**GANGER 2 (overlapping)**

Hey you crazy?!/

(snatching the gun hand down)

**GANGER 1**  
/You out your head?!

**GANGER 3**  
This son-of-a-bitch –

**GANGER 1**  
Yeah yeah I know that's fine. We got to think of ourselves. Slater ain't paying jack.

**GANGER 2**  
And he's crazy

**GANGER 1**  
Dangerous man there.

**GANGER 2**  
And that Lady Q, Queena –

**GANGER 1**  
What a joke.

**GANGER 2**  
She ain't nothing. We got to strike out on our own.

**GANGER 3**  
Yeah?

**GANGER 1**  
Yeah.

**GANGER 3**  
Yeah ok, I can see that.

**GANGER 1**  
We got to try to make use of this guy

**GANGER 2**  
Amount of money he can pull down....

**GANGER 1**  
Use your head.

**GANGER 3**  
Ok. Ok, ok. Sweet dreams there, Mr. Rapper Guy.

**GANGER 1**

Let's go.

**GANGER 2**

Yeah, ok.

**GANGER 3**

Right.

**[EXIT ALL]**

### **SCENE 13**

**QUEENA**

I met those bloods coming out asked them what's up...they were good enough to let me in. Oh my god...he is so...so beautiful. But he is really – out. If I could just...

(She begins to try to undo some of his clothes)

just...kind of...la la la...Rafer...Rafe....Wake up, hun...time to...hm-hmm...I think you know.... He fell asleep. Asleep. Asleep! Darn darn darn.... Not Before, after. Grrrr grrrrr eeeee

(She tries to look into his pants.)

Let...me...just...take a little peek....

(Rafer jumps awake startled)

Well hay! you're awake after all...

(Rafer flops back, dead asleep once more)

Men! Grrr, they drive me crazy! Hm. No sense to staying around here. Grrr grrr eeeeeee I HATE being frustrated. And I am FRUSTRATED. Grrr...eeeeee

(squeezing her legs together)

Well, if I can't have him, I've got to get somebody else. He'll be broken up, I know. Hmm, too bad for him. Maybe come crawling back – hmmm no, won't work, too bad.

But I still need money. Money. So we got to get Slater's drug business going better. Get it under way, bold and beautiful, reaching out everywhere.

And I know he'll give me a percentage.

**And the best way to get a business like that going is – war. War, war. Ha ha ha.**

**I have work to do.**

**[EXIT QUEENA]**

**(Rafer lies there)**

**(End of scene)**

**END of ACT I**

## ACT II

### SCENE 1 [Slater's headquarters]

[SLATER ENTERS. He sits and slumps in his chair, as though despondent.]

[ENTER COOTY]

**SLATER**

I've failed man, I'm failing here, I'm losing the war, the battle -- everything pretty soon. I'm a loser. That's what they call it -- old girlfriend called me that once.

**COOTY**

Forget about old girlfriends. Saps your strength.

**SLATER**

Yeah but she must a been right. We're having so many losses to these other gangs. Mexicans swarming up, Asian gangs swarming in. They both swirling all around. I'm like a drowning man, the whirlpool drawing me under. I got traitors here -- only way it could be happening.

**COOTY**

I don't think so man, and if you do like last time --

**SLATER**

It was necessary. I had to get rid of all those guys.

**COOTY**

And then we didn't have enough men. These are men! You can't just throw them away like some old checkers set.

**SLATER**

I never play checkers. I play chess. You should know. How I can work this whole system without trust? I can't trust people who go around making deals behind my back.

**COOTY**

You don't have to have trust. That has nothing to do with it. You **USE** the right person for the right task, you deploy this one here, that one there, because you know what each can

do, what they can't, and you work with that. You box them in, so if they do turn, they can't really do much. Why? because they don't know much. That's how you do it.

**SLATER**

No, no, no. I got to have complete total loyalty.

**COOTY**

What about our visitor?

**SLATER**

He's got to be my political figurehead artist. He's got to make me look good, respectable, into the arts, sophisticated bla bla – all that. Make up a list of names.

**COOTY**

I don't want to do that.

**SLATER**

It's an order.

**COOTY**

All right. If that's the case. But I'm warning how these things are going to go, I'm warning.

**SLATER**

And invite Queena to come see me.

**COOTY**

All right. I'll do it.

[EXIT SLATER]

[EXIT COOTY]

**SCENE 2 [Slater's Headquarters]**

**[ENTER QUEENA escorted by a guard. The guard withdraws.]**

**[ENTER SLATER after a moment.]**

**QUEENA**

Well I got your invitation. What a surprise, I must say.

**SLATER**

Well, it shouldn't be a surprise, I don't think.

**QUEENA**

Well...it was. And I think that's because we have something of an...unfortunate history.

**SLATER**

Yes, I suppose. But let's let bygones be bygones. Just not dwell on it.

**QUEENA**

My view exactly. We've bickered long enough, and we have common enemies.

**SLATER**

Yes, that's right. And they are dangerous.

**QUEENA**

Yes.

**SLATER**

And clever.

**QUEENA**

Yes, I think so.

**SLATER**

And relentless.

**QUEENA**

I was just going to say –

**SLATER**

**But I know what to do now. Do you know what?**

**QUEENA**

**I'm sure that a man like you knows how to deal with...all sorts of things. I have always thought that about you. We've had unfortunate...clashes --**

**SLATER**

**Yes.**

**QUEENA**

**Of will. But I never for a moment doubted your...your strength, your ability, your courage, or any other manly virtue, so I know you will have the solution.**

**SLATER**

**A solution's an idea. And yet we need not ideas but action. Strong.**

**QUEENA**

**Yes, yes I see that.**

**SLATER**

**Ruthless. Relentless.**

**QUEENA**

**I know you can be very relentless.**

**SLATER**

**Powerful.**

**QUEENA**

**I've known your power.**

**SLATER**

**Yes. I suppose. It's quite simple. We attack everywhere all of these groups. And our own people! That betrayed me! and now they're out there with them! ...yeah, we attack all of them. Every time this or that one's not looking or they're sitting back lounging, kind a satisfied resting on their laurels, you might say, then – BANG –that's when we hit 'em.**

**QUEENA**

**It's inspiring to see a real man, I mean a real real man...some might even laugh, but I don't. I know how necessary it is.**

**SLATER**

**My problem is I got these gangers fighting each other – disunified. They should come back to me. I'd forgive them, keep an eye on them, of course...bring all our people together.**

How else can I get enough money to help our own that need help? Heard about this homeless woman – older woman living on the street. One of own people. Abused by some punks. How does this happen? How she's homeless in the first place?

**QUEENA**

Well yes, I've been concerned about this too.

**SLATER**

And I was hoping this hip hop star, this Rafer guy would help with that.

**QUEENA**

I think the same, I do.

**SLATER**

I need to get a handle on him. I think you can help with that.

**QUEENA**

Well if you insist. He isn't perhaps my type exactly, but for a greater cause...

**SLATER**

Correct. And you know I say I forgive those guys who betrayed, but...depends on how MUCH they betrayed. Little bit – ok. Bit more – ok, we can deal. A lot? No. And I got them in here, not just out there. I got to purge.

**QUEENA**

Oh yes.

**SLATER**

Get rid of them.

**QUEENA**

That's the best way. It's been wonderful meeting with you, Slater. But I have to go.

**SLATER**

Where?

**QUEENA**

I have a lot of new business connections. And I will use them to help you. Us. Believe me, this can be good. We are the perfect combination. We are the perfect combination. Never any such seen. In the entire history of this nation.

**SLATER**

I see. Well ok, go do what you got to do. But – come back.

**QUEENA**

Oh, I will.

**SLATER**  
I like the way you think.

**QUEENA**  
Well thank you.

**SLATER**  
You're welcome.

**QUEENA**  
I better go or I'll be late.

**[EXIT QUEENA]**

**[ENTER GANGERS]**

**SLATER**  
All right, my advisor, very intelligent man, has talked to you, no doubt. And I sure have. You know what you have to do. We must destroy these other gangs, you know what you have to do. Go do it.

**[EXIT SLATER]**

**[EXIT GANGERS]**

**GANGERS (The empty stage)**

**BLOOD BLOOD BLOOD**

**Guns guns guns  
We got the guns**

*Gotta do what you gotta do*

**Aint gonna hide, aint gonna run  
Cause you know I got a gun**

**Kill kill kill  
And you know we will will will**

*Gotta do what you gotta do*

**He gone to lie out flat and cold  
On that big autopsy table  
Cause you know I'm going to kill**

**Blood blood blood  
Gonna come on like a flood**

*Gotta do what you gotta do*

**Gonna be pools a blood**

**SCENE 3 (Rafer's place)**

**[AUNT MAY and RAFER enter to greet each other]**

**RAFER (hugging her)**

**Hello aunt may, haven't seen you in a while.**

**AUNT MAY**

**Yes yes, Rafer...Rafe. My my, look at you. You glitter like a jewelry box. And you've been out here –**

**RAFER**

**Yeah I been out here a little while.**

**AUNT MAY**

**Raising the devil.**

**RAFER**

**No no, I'm on business. Got a recording contract.**

**AUNT MAY**

**Ok.**

**RAFER**

**I was having a lot of trouble back there in New York, you know...that place...well anyhow. I'm out here now putting down a whole bunch of new material.**

**AUNT MAY**

**How's it going so far?**

**RAFER**

**It's going great. Got this producer, he wants a certain type of thing, you know, but we can work it out.**

**AUNT MAY**

**But I been hearing you're out on the town a lot all over town at all all hours. Is that right? You know –**

**RAFER**

**Well hey –**

**AUNT MAY**

**Getting drunk a lot, getting way way way drunk. Now Rafe –**

**RAFER**

**I need inspiration, Aunt May that's why they call it spirits right**

**AUNT MAY**

**Different kinds of spirits and I think you know. And I been hearing your hanging around with the wrong, wrong, very wrong type of women, and you know what I mean. I will say no more.**

**RAFER**

**They're my friends its lonely for me out here. Had some people from New York come out with me I don't know where they are, they're hiding. They're doing their thing – air and sunshine after the dark canyons of New York City. And that Queena – you know her, right? –**

**AUNT MAY**

**Oh yes. Made some love charms for her once, I don't know how they're working, kind of a hard case there...**

**RAFER**

**She chasing me all around. I can't run fast enough.**

**AUNT MAY**

**I got her covered, don't worry.**

**RAFER**

**And I don't know how to put it...I used to think I got to be the peoples voice. I still think that I do.**

**AUNT MAY**

**Well good, that's what they need.**

**RAFER**

**But I don't know – now, this guy Keller, you know he wants always lighter type stuff and I'm thinking maybe he's got a point there. Maybe I've been pushing too much of that political stuff into my songs.**

**AUNT MAY**

**No, you need to do that. You know. You know what they need. When you listen to music, it comes into the soul and that's important. You know all this.**

**RAFER**

Well that's kind of what I'm saying, and it's sort of like I don't know which way to go. I know which way makes the most money though. It's why I was running low on cash back there. Companies wouldn't take me on, they'd run – too abrasive, too political. 'Don't call us, we'll call you'...yeah. Get it from my mother I guess.

**AUNT MAY**

Well of course you do. That's exactly right. And I think you know what she wants, and what she is.

**RAFER**

Yeah, sure I know, I know...she's back there lots of things I have to get for her. She's doing better, she's doing better – in the hospital a couple times, but she's better, she's good.

**AUNT MAY**

She'll be all right, Rafer. It takes time. She went through a lot.

**RAFER**

And then I got nephews, nieces, and they all need different things. And of course there was the One, wanted to get her some stuff...never mind about her....

**AUNT MAY**

You need to sort things out in your mind. I can't tell you what to do, which way to go, but I do know that the soul needs quiet.

**RAFER**

I don't need no quiet Aunt May. I am here to speak out, to show them, to make them pay attention. I am air, I am fire, I'm love, and I'm desire...I'm –

**AUNT MAY**

What is it, hun? Tell me.

**RAFER**

I WANT TO...SHOW THEM. NOT JUST SOME HIP HOP ....

**AUNT MAY**

Well then –

**RAFER**

But I need money.

**AUNT MAY**

The soul needs quiet, and I think you know in your mind, you know.

**RAFER**

I'm good, I'm fine....

**AUNT MAY**

**I know, but sleep now. That is what I want you now...[charm, he begins to doze] to do.**

**[he rouses a bit]**

**RAFER**

**No no no, not now with that. I got to...do things.**

**(She sprinkles more magic dust)**

**AUNT MAY**

**I insist. And I told you I gave Queena or Lady Q as she insists...I gave her magic too.**

**[AUNT MAY EXITS. RAFER is left asleep on floor or couch.]**

**SCENE 4 [Rafer's place]**

**(Rafer is asleep on the floor)**

**[ENTER QUEENA in a trance]**

**(As she enters Rafer slowly rises. They stand opposite each other.)**

**QUEENA**

**The night is my home, my proper place and my realm. But there are patterns in it like currents in dark water with strange things there. These things possess me.**

**RAFER**

**The thing that is around us that we cannot see will surely hurt, will kill. I have seen this. I know it to be true. It weighs upon me. I do not know what to do.**

**QUEENA**

**It was not always so – at my bright beginning... and yet it is now. My soul has in it something that I do not understand.**

**RAFER**

To have a voice that speaks to others. They are there before me. Where am I? they reach out to me. I reach out to them. But there is still an empty space. I try to step into it.

**QUEENA**

I ask what I am. I see my hands, I see my arms, in the mirror I see my face. I need what you have. My soul was taken out of me. I need what you have.

**RAFER**

Searching so long for my counterpart.

**QUEENA**

If I cannot have it, if you will not give it, I must go back to where I came from.

**RAFER**

I do not know where I am from. Why am I here? I too am searching, but I do not know where to find what I need.

[QUEENA EXITS sinking back into darkness]

[EXIT RAFER, as though still asleep]

**SCENE 5 (Rafer's place)**

[ENTER RAFER, he is tired and sits a while seeming preoccupied]

[Then ENTER JANELLE and MARKITA]

**MARKITA**

We still want to audition for you.

**JANELLE**

Yeah, I go first.

**MARKITA**

No, I go first.

**JANELLE**

All right, I go second, two's a high number. (to Rafer) Anyway, you can't run away this time.

**RAFER**  
Ok you got me cornered.

**JANELLE**  
All right?

**RAFER**  
Yeah, all right. Wait – where’s that bottle?

(Janelle and Markita hide a bottle behind their backs, passing to each other. Rafer pretends to be fooled.)

I had one a minute ago, you snatch it away. Oh hohoho – you all hiding your bottles on me here. Come on, give give give give.

(Markita hands over bottle)

Ok. That’s better. Hey baby, you looking pretty fine tonight. What you say you and me –

**JANELLE** (barging in, mock jealous)  
Hey!

**RAFER**  
Oh two of you, that’s cool. What you say we go out to where the night is bright with neon light--

**MARKITA**  
Well...we wanted to sing for you...Come on!

**JANELLE**  
Yeah.

**RAFER**  
Oh I see, audition time. Ok, ok...

(Janelle readies herself, then sings)

**JANELLE**  
You been gone so long –

So long  
And all I can do is  
Sing this lonesome song

All I can do  
Is think of you

Yes it is you  
I've been  
Dreaming of  
You are the one,  
The one I love

RAFER  
Mmm, not bad. Where you learn that?

JANELLE  
I been practicing.

RAFER  
Oh yeah? What else you practice?

MARKITA  
Ok ok ok -- look out the way.

JANELLE (mock annoyed)  
--hmm.

RATER  
All right, what you got for me?

(Markita readies herself, then sings)

MARKITA  
I am so low and I'm  
So blue because I  
Just can't get along  
Without you, without you

You have everything  
That day and night declare  
Essential to me  
You are light and  
Everywhere you are  
Is where I have to be

Without you  
I have nothing  
Won't you give  
Without you  
I can just just  
Barely live

Without you  
I can't feel I  
Need your touch  
Without you yes  
I have lost so much

Without you  
And I'm waiting  
Patiently

Without you  
I am blind O  
Can't you see

RAFER  
Oh, hey....

[ENTER THREE COPS]

COP 1  
All right/

COP 2  
/What we have here?/

COP 3  
/What we have here?/

JANELLE  
Hey/

MARKITA  
/Hey

JANELLE  
What!

MARKITA  
What are you doing!

COP1  
Shut up!

(to Rafer)  
Get down!

**COP2**  
**Down on the floor!**

**JANELLE**  
**You stop –!**

**COP3 (to Rafer)**  
**Face Down!**

**MARKITA**  
**Leave him alone!**

**COP3 (to the girls)**  
**We know who you two are.**

**COP2**  
**And you both have long, long records.**

**COP1**  
**So just be quiet or you'll be coming with us too.**

**JANELLE**  
**Ok ok/**

**MARKITA**  
**/Ok ok                    (Janelle and Markita shrink back)**

**COP1**  
**On your face I told you!**

**RAFER**  
**All right, fine!**

**COP3**  
**It's fine, ha? He thinks it's fine.**

**COP2**  
**He's a fine type of guy.**

**COP1 (searching Rafer)**  
**Mr. Fine – What do we see here?**

**COP2**  
**Oh oh oh –**

**COP3**

It looks like dope.

**RAFER**

That's not mine, you just planted that.

**COP1**

We're going to plant *you*, you don't shut up.

**COP3**

All right, get up.

**COP2**

Get up.

**COP1**

Get up when you're told 'get up.'

(Rafer gets up)

All right, let's go.

[EXIT RAFER AND COPS]

(They march Rafer out)

**MARKITA**

Oh my god.

**JANELLE**

What is going on.

**MARKITA**

I don't know. We better go.

**JANELLE**

We better try to –

**MARKITA**

Yeah.

**JANELLE**

Find out.

**MARKITA**

**Yeah.**

**[EXIT BOTH]**

**SCENE 6 (A detention place)**

**[ENTER RAFER with COPS]**

**(Rafer is brought into the cell)**

**COP 1**

**Where you get this little dude, ha?**

**COP 2**

**Hey boy –**

**RAFER**

**Don't call me that.**

**COP 1**

**Hey boy –**

**RAFER**

**Don't call me that I said.**

**COP 1 (he slams his baton on the table or floor)**

**COP 2**

**Call you what we want to call you. You hear this? !! (he slams baton on the table or floor)**

**COP 1**

**Now you're going to tell us what we need to know. (strike)**

**RAFER**

**No. I'm not going to.**

**COP 2**

**Yes, you are – or we break your head.**

**COP 1**

**That's right.**

**COP 2**

**Right open for you.**

**COP 1**

**You see this gun, punk? Here. Whyn't you feel it.**

**(pushing gun in his face)**

**COP 2**

**Show it to him, show it to him – this punk needs to see the gun.**

**COP 1**

**He a chicken ass nigger –**

**RAFER**

**Don't call me...god damn you – god damn – we're gonna –**

**COP 1**

**YOU SEE THIS!?**

**(pulling out gun)**

**COP 2**

**Show him the gun some more.**

**[THEY FORCE IT INTO HIS MOUTH.]**

**COP 1**

**How you like that, ha boy? (There is a struggle. Rafer pulls away but is forced down.)**

**COP 2**

**Get down, you get down.**

**RAFER**

**Ain't getting ...you piece of shit.**

**COP 1/ COP 2**

**--get down get down get down get down (sharp blows with each)**

**you do what we say or else**

**THEY BOTH POINT GUNS AT RAFER ON FLOOR**

**[THEY EXIT]**

**(Rafer remains on floor)**

**SCENE 7**

**(Rafer sinks into a semi-conscious state)**

**RAFER** (he is trying to raise up, but cannot really)  
Where...where...I was...I...I...I was...

**[THE GHOST OF HUEY NEWTON ENTERS AND STANDS]**

**HUEY NEWTON**

I was...And I was... I was the beginning. And then I met the end. I am still searching. I am still trying.

Do you know who I was?

**RAFER**

... (Rafer tries to raise himself up but again cannot really. It's as if he's trying to remember something)

**HUEY NEWTON**

There are many questions, but  
answer this question first: do you know who I was?  
I was one of those who started the great movement.  
We didn't think of it as great, at first it was nothing.  
We were only boys, younger than you are now.  
I and one of my friends, we went around Oakland watching the police.  
I carried a law book in one hand, a tape recorder in the other.  
We followed the police, taped them, recorded them on film.  
They didn't like it – broke our heads, broke this, broke that.  
It did not matter, we continued. Our idea was, the law will be the law,  
And not some other kind of thing, and it will be the law  
for everyone, the exact same law for everyone. Seven times  
I was thrown into solitary confinement -- no lights,  
So dark I couldn't see my hand, I couldn't see the walls,  
I floated in the darkness -- no cot,  
Not even a toilet -- a drain in the middle of the floor,  
I had to feel blindly around for it with my hands.  
I trained myself to neither eat nor drink for days on end,

So that I wouldn't have to piss or shit. In this way –  
And in a hundred other little ways -- I defeated them, slowly.  
Do you know who I was? What was my name? Do you know?

**RAFER**

Everything's...mixed up...here...I can't...

**HUEY NEWTON**

I didn't think so.

**RAFER**

I'm trying...seems dark everywhere...

**HUEY NEWTON**

No one can help you now, and that is fine. But one thing I will say: the police, these police may be evil, but if you kill one of them -- if you kill anyone -- then you yourself are dead, for real, and forever. You can do it if you want, but I am warning you. Having crossed that line, you cannot step back from it. You've been warned.

[EXIT GHOST]

[TWO GUARDS ENTER]

**GUARD 1**

Get up. Time to take you to court to see the judge.

**GUARD 2**

Come on, get up. Let's go.

**RAFER**

All right, all right.

**GUARD 2**

Let's go.

**GUARD 1**

Come on.

[EXIT ALL]

**SCENE 8 (Slater's headquarters)****SLATER**

What's all this I hear he gets himself thrown in jail? He's going to be an asset for me or a liability? He going to be something I can use and be proud of or a tin can tied on my butt clanking along? People hear about this –

**COOTY**

They won't hear nothing. Settle down now, come on.

**SLATER**

What was it, dope?

**COOTY**

They planted it.

**SLATER**

How do we know? I don't want some junky being my front man with high up financial types, society types, all that...

**COOTY**

That's not his type of thing – he just like to have a few drinks and then he likes the ladies and that's it. I got a lawyer for him. I heard Keller's taking care of bail.

**SLATER**

Ok. When he gets out tell him to come see me. He hasn't answered my offer yet of protection. If he doesn't answer how I want, he's going to need – protection.

[EXIT SLATER]

[EXIT COOTY]

**SCENE 9**

**[JANELLE and MARKITA enter the bare stage]**

**MARKITA**  
**Ooo where is she?**

**JANELLE**  
**Late, I guess.**

**MARKITA**  
**Usually we're the ones late.**

**JANELLE**  
**Fashionably late.**

**[ENTER AUNT MAY]**

**JANELLE**  
**Aunt May, have you heard?**

**AUNT MAY**  
**Of course. I hear everything. Yes yes yes, what a rambunctious –**

**MARKITA**  
**But I'm really worried.**

**JANELLE**  
**Me too.**

**AUNT MAY**  
**I wouldn't worry. I guess this record guy, this Keller, he's stepping in for the bail. That's good. He'll be out in no time.**

**MARKITA**  
**What about the charges?**

**AUNT MAY**  
**They're bogus. Everybody knows. I know the judge.**

**JANELLE**

**You do?**

**AUNT MAY**

**Yeah, made love charms for him too. He needs it, let me tell you (pinky gesture) Extra ammo. So anyway, I'll pay him a visit in his chambers. Before that Queena gets to him. She was once my star pupil. She has gone to the bad. I will say no more.**

**MARKITA**

**Yeah well, we know about all that.**

**JANELLE**

**Oh yeah, she's –**

**MARKITA**

**She's –**

**JANELLE**

**She's whatever.**

**AUNT MAY**

**I agree.**

**MARKITA**

**But there's something else.**

**AUNT MAY**

**Know about that too.**

**JANELLE**

**One of his –**

**AUNT MAY**

**I know, I know.**

**JANELLE**

**Bloods –**

**AUNT MAY**

**I know.**

**MARKITA**

**Was shot.**

**AUNT MAY**

Yep. But he'll be all right. In the hospital now. I'll get his room number, you can go see him.

MARKITA  
Ok.

JANELLE  
Yeah ok.

MARKITA  
But the other thing is, I'm certain that he knows.

JANELLE  
It's preyed on his mind.

MARKITA  
He gets these moods, he's thinking of her. A cloud comes down, he goes off by himself.

AUNT MAY  
Tell him to come and see me when he gets out. Tell him to behave. I told him. And I showed him. But he didn't listen or understand. Maybe one day he will. I don't know. But in the meantime go see him.

[EXIT AUNT MAY]

JANELLE  
Well...

MARKITA  
I'm still worried.

JANELLE  
He come out the hospital, if he start to go crazy,

MARKITA  
Who knows what could happen.

JANELLE  
Yeah.

MARKITA  
We better go try to see him, try to make him not be crazy.

JANELLE  
That girl, she really –

**MARKITA**  
Yea she really did. Better go.

**[EXIT BOTH]**

**SCENE 10 (Rafer's place)**

**[ENTER RAFER]**

(He dances a little perhaps, making himself a drink, etc)

**RAFER**  
Yes. Yes yes yes. Free free free – way I was made to be. Cause I'm a lucky man, I'm a lucky man, and bad luck don't follow me.

Cause I've got nine lives and they're all strong.

All you evil spirits  
You all stand in line

Swirling all around me

But the time is mine.

**[ENTER JANELLE and MARKITA]**

(they embrace Rafer)

**JANELLE**  
Oh there you are, there you are.

**MARKITA**  
Oh yes. Missed you

**RAFER**  
Hey hey – in a public place here. See all the people. (indicates the audience)

**RAFER [TO AUDIENCE]**

I'm coming to get you!  
To bring you along!  
You will hear my song!  
And stand stand stand

Up!

(they give him puzzled looks)

**RAFER (to Janelle and Markita)**

**Don't worry.**

**I'm not going to do what I was thinking of. They're thinking of me one way, but we're going to be something else. At a different level.**

**But yeah Keller stepped in, paid – I'm free, it's taken care of. One good thing to knowing a rich guy like that....**

**I'm just going to say it right now. I'm going to take it to that Slater. I know he's the one leading all these young guys off track. There's others but he's the center. They have to wise up.**

**MARKITA**

**Wait Rafer, wait!**

**JANELLE**

**Yeah wait!**

**RAFER**

**Yeah, what I'm waiting for?**

**MARKITA**

**You have got to be careful.**

**JANELLE**

**He is dangerous – very very.**

**MARKITA**

**You got to know what you're dealing with with him.**

**JANELLE**

**He has guys killed just like that they look at him wrong – they end up dead a week later.**

**MARKITA**

**They talk to him wrong – never seen again.**

**JANELLE**

**They make a joke – he takes it wrong, they're a casualty.**

**MARKITA**

**One guy they found pieces of him in different dumpsters around the city.**

**JANELLE**

**It was awful.**

**MARKITA**

Thought he was disloyal.

**JANELLE**

You can't get in his face.

**RAFER**

I know what I'm doing, seeing this as long as I been around. Guys think the way to be strong is to be mean, that's what it is. They think it's... whatever. But it's EVIL – plain and simple. I know how to deal with that.

I'm working at a different level – I told you.

**JANELLE**

Well...

**MARKITA**

Well, you know...

**JANELLE**

Yeah...

(They both put their hands or fingers on him lightly, as though afraid they might not see him again)

**RAFER**

I got to go. I've got to see some people.

(They both embrace him)

**JANELLE**

Be careful, really.

**MARKITA**

Yes, be careful.

**RAFER**

I will. Don't worry.

[EXIT RAFER]

**MARKITA**

He's so –

**JANELLE**

Yes, I know. You all come on, that Aunt May wants to talk to us.

**[EXIT BOTH]**

**SCENE 11**

**[ENTER AUNT MAY and COOTY to each other]**

**AUNT MAY**

**You got to help Rafer.**

**COOTY**

**I already helped him. That was me he saw in the cell – ghost, ain't no ghost. I just made myself look different. But it was true though, it was all true**

**AUNT MAY**

**That wasn't you**

**COOTY**

**It was too.**

**AUNT MAY**

**Well, if you have that much mojo, you stay and help our boy.**

**COOTY**

**Well look now, you got to understand my situation.**

**AUNT MAY**

**No, you look. You help him. Or else.**

**COOTY**

**Yeah, all right all right all right. I am, I been. Strange how it's going.**

**AUNT MAY**

**You were my apprentice. Now I don't know if you went to the good or to the bad.**

**COOTY**

**The soul has both dark and light. Like a window, the edge between the shade and the light, when the shade is drifting back and forth. The soul is there.**

**AUNT MAY**

**Ok well you always had interesting ideas, as I have said before. But you better mind what I say now.**

**COOTY**

**It's going different than I expected...but yeah, that's fine.**

**[EXIT AUNT MAY]**

**COOTY**

**Pushy pushy woman. Pushy pushy pushy.**

**[EXIT COOTY]**

**SCENE 12 (Rafer's place, Rafer not there)**

**[ENTER GANGERS]**

**(they are tired and just hanging out, smoking, drinking, etc.)**

**GANGER 1**

**Where's he at?/**

**GANGER 2**

**/Nobody knows/**

**GANGER 3**

**/Nobody knows where he is/**

**GANGER 1**

**What's this going on here, you know? This is nuts here.**

**GANGER 2**

**Slater's nuts, that's it right there.**

**GANGER 3**

**He think's he's going to be the big man.**

**GANGER 1**

How he going to do that, by killing everybody?/

**GANGER 2**

I never heard such craziness?/

**GANGER 3**

Son of a bitch is dangerous. He's a dangerous man, man get crazy like this. /

**GANGER 1**

/That's right. /

**GANGER 2**

/Yeah.

**GANGER 1**

He become dangerous like a rat in the corner.

**GANGER 3**

A rat in the corner going to chew through the whole city, but he going to chew through us first.

**GANGER 2**

He wants to 'purge' – what's that mean? That means us, and all the other guys been helping him, working for him.

**GANGER 1**

Selling dope for him, selling guns, pussy, everything –/

**GANGER 2**

/beating people up, break ins,/

**GANGER 3**

/Shooting people,/

**GANGER 1**

/get thrown in jail, prison term, /

**GANGER 3**

/in that cell with some gorilla, some ignorant person –

**GANGER 2**

All the great stuff we're doing for this guy, he's thinking which of us he going to blow our brains out first.

**GANGER 1**

Ingrate – he's an ingrate ingrate type a guy.

**GANGER 3**  
Yeah that's right/

**GANGER 2**  
/Sad sad case.

**GANGER 3**  
I don't care about sad, we got to move.

**GANGER 1**  
I don't like the whole thing of attacking.

**GANGER 2**  
Yep. /

**GANGER 1**  
/Every other gang?!/

**GANGER 2**  
/Yep.

**GANGER 3**  
We got to make deals not just war all the time.

**GANGER 1**  
It ain't practical.

**GANGER 2**  
Costs too much,

**GANGER 3**  
Making deals is better.

**GANGER 1**  
So what we do?

**GANGER 2**  
We got to prepare/

**GANGER 3**  
/We got to look around --

**GANGER 2**  
In secret, got to be careful.

**GANGER 1**

Said he wants to see us now. Some kind of big meeting.

**GANGER 2**

You think it's safe to go?

**GANGER 3**

Be worse not to.

**GANGER 1**

Let's just do it.

**GANGER 2**

Maybe we kill him now, what you think? – for us you know...

**GANGER 3**

Not sure. Don't really want to do this.

**GANGER 1**

Who want us to do this, knock him off?

**GANGER 2**

Ugh, guess who –

**GANGER 3**

Yeah, she knows what she wants...question is –

**GANGER 2**

Yeah, I don't know.

**GANGER 3**

I don't either.

**GANGER 1**

Me neither, could set off chaos. Everybody packing and loaded?

(They all produce handguns and prep them)

**GANGER 2**

Right.

**GANGER 3**

Oh yea.

**[EXIT ALL]**

**SCENE 13 (Slater's places)**

**[The GANGERS enter. JANELLE and MARKITA are with them]**

**(One or two gangers attempt familiarities with J/M who shoo them away)**

**JANELLE/MARKITA (overlapping, ad lib)**  
**Stop stop tzz not here in public...**

**(ganger laughter)**

**[ENTER SLATER after a moment.]**

**(Everyone straightens up and becomes formal)**

**SLATER**

**I wanted you all to come here because I am declaring war. That's right. These other gangs, these other groups, these other people – they're not our people, they don't belong here, but they're coming in anyway. Disrespecting. Taking over. And I can't be having that. We can't be having that. So now we have to do our best, do our utmost – every one of us – all of you, each one. We've got to attack each one of them – be aggressive, attack. Stealth is good, crafty is good, deception is good – but attack, attack is best.**

**[ENTER RAFER]**

**SLATER**

**Hey how'd you get in?**

**RAFER**

**The guards let me in.**

**SLATER**

**Well isn't that great.**

**RAFER**

**Do you know why it is?**

**SLATER**

**No why is it?**

**RAFER**

Your own men are beginning to turn against you.

**GANGERS (overlapping, ad lib)**

What? No hey no no What are you talking...

**RAFER**

Wait! Let me talk.

**SLATER**

Yeah let him talk.

**RAFER (to the gangers)**

I'm not going to talk to him. I know what he is. You all know it too. I'm talking to you instead. I'm asking you – why are you doing like this? You spend your life selling, fighting, threatening, beating up.

**GANGERS (overlapping, ad lib)**

You don't know nothing man/

/what you talking out your hat/

yeah, where you get this...

**RAFER**

I know perfectly well, you know that I do. I've seen it my whole life, you think I only seen it coming out here? Got it back there too. Spread all over. We got to change things.

You got to help me change them. You got to be with me not him.

**GANGER**

You drew on us.

**RAFER**

You shot one of my bloods. You shot him! He's still alive – I'm so glad! – but you did that. You think I'm some kind of clown? But now – truce, truce – between us, and truce between east and west. We can't be fighting each other, killing each other. That's step one.

**SLATER**

You going to let this clown boy...talk this line. (to Rafer) You think you're going to come in here just like that? No!

[SLATER overturns a table. Everyone is startled except RAFER.]

**SLATER**

**We'll see right now what you got, what kind of a big man you are.**

**(SLATER moves threateningly toward RAFAEL)**

**(The girls throw themselves between them)**

**JANELLE and MARKITA**  
**No!**

**No!**

**MARKITA**  
**We've seen all this—**

**JANELLE**  
**We've seen it all before.**

**MARKITA**  
**Isn't there ever —**

**JANELLE**  
**Ever —**

**MARKITA**  
**Going to be anything else?**

**JANELLE**  
**Fighting, killing — I'm sick of it.**

**JANELLE and MARKITA**  
**We've had enough!**

**MARKITA**  
**Been to enough funerals. We've had enough.**

**JANELLE**  
**We love you.**

**MARKITA**  
**Think of it.**

**SLATER**  
**Well that's real nice.**

**(to the girls)**

**Clear outa the way.**

**(The girls shrink back)**

**(to RAFER)**

**Come on!**

**RAFER**

**I'm here.**

**(Rafer and Slater face off)**

**(They begin to fight. Rafer connects with a blow to Slater's jaw)**

**(Slater falls, stunned)**

**SLATER (rousing)**

**Well, hey...lucky punch...**

**(he draws his gun as he gets up)**

**My bullets are even more lucky – this 9mm worth of lucky.**

**RAFER (to gangers)**

**Which way you going to go? You have to choose.**

**[ENTER QUEENA]**

**QUEENA (to Janelle and Markita)**

**I knew I'd find you two here. Sucking up. So to speak.**

**(to Rafer)**

**Oh and what do we have here. Mr. kumbaya – ha ha so funny. I've heard it all before. Peace and all that...ha!... And you, big tough Slater, you're going to go along with that? Well at least you got up off the floor.**

**Now shoot! Shoot this prancing preaching clown boy! We need war! You know perfectly well! Or we'll be overrun by these other groups, these other gangs, these scum and rabble who think they can just come in here and pollute! Pollute! We are being polluted!**

**JANELLE and MARKITA**

**You're out of you're head.**

**MARKITA**

**Vietnamese.**

**JANELLE**  
**Chinese.**

**MARKITA**  
**Mexicans.**

**JANELLE**  
**We slept with all of them.**

**MARKITA**  
**Guatemalans too.**

**JANELLE**  
**It's all the same.**

**MARKITA**  
**They're beautiful.**

**JANELLE**  
**We love them all.**

**MARKITA**  
**Yep.**

**JANELLE**  
**Yep.**

**(The girls laugh. The gangers start to laugh, but then are still)**

**QUEENA**  
**You stupids! I told you to spy – You “love,” you “love”...what is this “love” bullshit!?**

**JANELLE**  
**Sory.**

**MARKITA**  
**Couldn't help it.**

**JANELLE**  
**Yeah.**

**MARKITA**  
**We're done with you Queena.**

**JANELLE**

**You used to be fun and nice, but something went wrong with you.**

**MARKITA**

**You're crazy now.**

**QUEENA**

**You just wait!**

**MARKITA**

**No –**

**JANELLE**

**No. We ain't going with you no more.**

**(Queena advances on the girls threateningly with a knife  
pulled from her fancy dress)**

**GANGER 3**

**Hey hey hey!!/**

**/GANGER 2/**

**Hey!!**

**/GANGER 1**

**Hey!!**

**(they grab her and get the knife)**

**QUEENA**

**Let me go! (ad lib throughout scene)**

**(The 2 girls rush her)**

**QUEENA**

**EEEEEEEEEEEEYYYYYY!!!! (ad lib)**

**THE GIRLS (as they pummel and scratch and tear at her gown)**

**You damned witch!/  
  
(QUEENA yells and shouts throughout, "Stop! No!**

**damn you! I'm gonna make you pay! Just wait! Put me  
down!" ad lib freely, with more or fewer obscenities,  
throughout)**

**/You blood sucking/**

**(the GANGERS help restrain QUEENA, and they keep  
hold of the knife as she tries to snatch it back "hey no,  
you ain't getting'..." ad lib, and then**

**RAFER: Hey look at that Slate. Lucky they/**

**/You devil fucking/**

**SLATER: Yeah, I see it that's cool. Maybe you better –**

**/hate spew /-- you fuck, fuck you/**

**/fuck you/ (ad lib with increasing frenzy)**

**(the girls pull her fancy wig off)**

**--Watch out, yeah. Look at that (pointing to the chaos)**

**QUEENA**

**AAAAHHHHHH!!!**

**MARKITA**

**(they smack her with her own wig)**

**Here you go, Queena/**

**JANELLE**

**/Miss queen**

**(the girls and gangers lift her up or drag her)**

**(Queenena yells and shouts throughout, "Stop! No! damn you! Get off of me...Put me down!" ad lib freely, with more or fewer obscenities, throughout)**

**THE GIRLS (as they struggle with Queenena)**

**Rat tail eating, roach soup, spider shit, crazy bitch you –**

**QUEENA: AHHH**

**(ad lib all overlapping)**

**JANELLE**

**You got a trash can anywhere?**

**GANGER 1**

**Oh yeah, hey. Right here – (he runs backstage and returns with a large trash bin)**

**(The girls and the gangers stuff Queenena into the trash can)**

**GANGERS: (they are having difficulty handling her)**

**(ad lib)**

**"she strong, what the hell..."**

**"whoa damn she kicking hard..." "I never saw..."**

“anything like this...”

(But finally they get her in.)

MARKITA

QUEENA (ad lib with curses and screams)  
AHHHHHHH

Here you go Queena, how's that!

JANELLE

And here's your hair. (throwing it at her)

[ENTER COOTY and AUNT MAY]

AUNT MAY  
STOP!

What is this insanity – what!? Is this –

Because of you. (to Slater)

SLATER  
Everything is my fault – oh yeah...

COOTY (to the gangers regarding Queena)  
Pull her out.

SLATER  
Another traitor I got here. I should a known – two of them!

COOTY  
And that's what I say – what's going on? Just...exactly...what? (regarding Queena) Oh my...

QUEENA (lying on the floor) SCREAMS THREE TIMES like a cornered animal, while writhing about.

[1] *first scream*

[2] *second scream*

[3] *third scream*

COOTY  
Shh shh now you crazed ... (reaches into his medicine bag and sprinkles magic dust on her)

Troubled...

(She grows still and sleeps)

Troubled girl. You too are of the spirits. But I could not fix you.

GANGER 3 (to Rafer)

Ok man, look –

RAFER

Yeah?

GANGER 2

We get what you're saying.

RAFER

Yeah?

GANGER 1

Yeah.

GANGER 3

We got to change.

GANGER 2

Change.

GANGER 1

Yeah change.

GANGER 3

Been seeing it all.

GANGER 2

Oh yeah.

GANGER 1

It's true.

GANGER 3

Long –

GANGER 2

Long time.

GANGER 1

We're with you, man.

**GANGER 3**  
Definitely.

**SLATER**  
More traitors –

You, DeVon

You, TJ

You Jack, my main man

I don't know if you know where it's going to lead. Money is a sure thing. You focus on that by whatever way you get it -- good way, bad way – but then you got something: money, money, money's that something – real. This thing here, what is it? – future – what is that? -- a dream. What's real, what's a dream... which are you choosing? I know which I am.

[EXIT SLATER]

**RAFER**  
Now is my time. And it is our time. I have pursued my destiny, my fate.

**AUNT MAY**  
Have you really?

**COOTY**  
Really?

**RAFER**  
Everyone has a destiny. All you, all you – where are you going? And where am I? But it all has to be done.

**AUNT MAY**  
I remember the beginning....Washed with the spring rains, you drank the light from my breast and rose up gathering a living instrument – a voice. There was a radiant caul around you. It fell away and you rose up past my sight.

**RAFER**  
I don't remember, but I believe what you say.

**COOTY**  
And then I found you in the black streams of the deep water and the rippling moonlight, and I reached through the toiling currents that gave me jewels, made of the stars and the

sleeping sun, and you gathered around inside my hands, and I picked you up and set you into the sparkling dirt and you were like a coal, small and hard, and I threw you up into waiting air.

**RAFER**

I believe you. Although I don't remember.

**COOTY**

The hard coal that you are -- compressed fire, the diamond -- it's the black rage of poetry that burns inside you.

**RAFER**

I don't remember, but I remember.

(Cooty and Aunt May move to leave)

**COOTY and AUNT MAY**

Farewell/Farewell

**SLATER**

Eh where you going?

**COOTY**

See about you later.

**RAFER**

Yeah, where *are* you going?

**AUNT MAY**

We've done everything.

**COOTY**

That's right. But now we have to do this. (regarding Queena)

**AUNT MAY**

Yes yes yes.... Come on honey we'll get you cleaned up.

(They help Queena up.)

**QUEENA**

I want you to see me. Face -- faces, faces. I have faces but there's one face underneath.

There is one, there is. There's something inside of me. It's inside me. I can't get rid of it. I want you to see....

**AUNT MAY**

We do. But we have to go now.

**COOTY**

Yeah, let's go. We'll take care of you.

**QUEENA**

I want you to see...

**AUNT MAY**

All right, yes. Come now, come on...

[EXIT COOTY, AUNT MAY, and QUEENA]

**RAFER**

But now destiny – everyone has a destiny. You must step into it. But I...do I?... But I have helpers all around – all around through the world, through the city, through the air and sky, and dark and the light. And here, right here (motions to the audience) – my princes, my princes, my princes and my queens! How could I worry – everything will be fine. My mother gave so much so that the black panther party of self-defense could live and be strong and would lead the way.

And my gold – I'm giving it away, going to sell it off. Give the money to the Movement. It's still there. I've seen it, I hear it, I feel it. My mother was in it. She gave everything she had. She gave everything she had.

Money from my songs, my songs! Give half to the movement, the people.

We got to have unity!

We don't need Gold. Here it is.

(he takes off his jewelry and casts it on the floor)

We need unity.

**CHOR: (partial chorus)**

*fight the man, fight the power (softly)*

We've got to have unity.

U means unity, that means everyone

*stand up, stand up,  
stand up*

N means "no," no more fighting

*fight the man, fight the power*

I means I, every single one got to say it to themselves, got to know it in themselves

T means time, and the time is now

*stand up, stand up, (louder)*  
*stand up*

Y means why, and the reason is because we have to raise things up here.

It's not just my money, it's myself I'm giving, cuz I know from now on I got a bull's-eye on me.

*fight the man, fight the power*

(music comes into the chorus gradually)

RAFER (to the audience)

STAND

STAND

You, you all, I want you to stand!

*stand up*

And I was just hangin' round,  
Had my ear pressed down  
Right there onto the ground,  
And I'm feelin' the vibrations  
Of all the nations

*fight the man, fight the power*

What kind a thing gonna come  
Not from the barrel of a gun  
But from my words, my voice.

*stand up, stand up*

And I am calling out to you,  
To every one of you.

*yes yes yes*

The movement will live on.

**STAND UP!**

Night in Los Angeles

Lightning bolt sky with no lightning

**FIGHT THE MAN, FIGHT THE POWER**

Rain flooded streets with no rain

Hurricane warning with no hurricane

**I AM THE HURRICANE**

**STAND UP!**

**FIGHT THE MAN, FIGHT THE POWER**

**STAND STAND STAND**

But who's gonna do it,  
Who's gonna do it?  
Who's the one gonna be  
Gonna step to me

*stand stand*

Someone gonna shoot me  
I know it, I know it  
I can feel it, but I can deal with it  
Got to be real with it  
But I still know what I know.

*stand stand*

*fight the man, fight the power*

**GANGERS (ad lib)**

It ain't me man, what you talking /this is me you talking to/  
yo check it you're be crazy man, it ain't us

**RAFER**

Always in the air  
I can feel it everywhere,  
Just want to know  
Who's it gonna be.  
Keep thinkin it  
No matter who I see,  
Their smiling smiling faces  
Shining all toward me –  
Gold rings and chains  
And a gold locket  
With maybe my picture inside,  
And a gun in their coat pocket,  
Ain't nowhere I can hide.

Who's gonna do it yeah,  
You or you or you?

**GANGERS (ad lib)**

No man no no no

**STAND STAND, STAND UP**

**FIGHT THE MAN, FIGHT THE POWER**

But if I die  
 It ain't gonna be  
 Some kind a tragic thing,  
 Cuz then I be comin' back  
 And then I deal with it,  
 I will still sing

**FIGHT THE MAN, FIGHT THE POWER**

So if I die  
 It ain't gonna be  
 That I am really gone –  
 No matter what the man can do  
 I will live on

Well all right, let's go, let's go.

**FIGHT THE MAN, FIGHT THE POWER**

**GANGERS (ad lib)**

Yeah we're with you man

That's right

That's right

**RAFER**

All right, come on –

(to audience)

Everyone who wants to see the movement live on, live on, live on –

You come too!

[EXIT ALL]

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**END OF PLAY**